



LIONS' PRIDE

A publication of East Mississippi Community College

\$100K donated for nursing scholarships

► PG. 8

Spotlight: First female Mortuary Science grad

► PG. 11

Mississippi Coding Academies adds EMCC hub

► PG. 16

EMCC joins Achieving the Dream network

► PG. 40



Remembering former EMCC President Dr. Tommy Davis

Lions claim 2022 MACCC Football Championship ► PG. 24

Five inducted into Sports Hall of Fame ► PG. 18

Alumni honored at Homecoming ► PG. 38

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



EMCC President Dr. Scott Alsobrooks

The breadth of services we at East Mississippi Community College provide to the communities we serve is truly remarkable and a source of pride for all of us who are fortunate enough to work at this great institution.

Our three academic divisions offer a wide variety of university-related programs for those looking to transfer to a four-year university and there are more than 50-career technical programs of study that lead to one-year certificates or two-year associate degrees.

Our Adult Education department helps students seeking to earn a high school diploma, prepares them for entry into college and provides them with training in soft skills needed to succeed in the workforce. Those looking for a new job skill can learn to operate heavy construction equipment, drive a semitruck or collect blood samples as a phlebotomist, to name a few of the many short-term training programs offered through our Workforce and Community Services division.

High-tech training for careers in advanced manufacturing is available at The Communiversity and graduates from our Hospitality, Culinary and Turf Management programs at the Lion Hills Center are in high demand.

Our WIOA Career Services Department hosts regular job fairs and offers work-based learning through internships, externships and apprenticeships. A WIN Job Center, one of Mississippi's service centers for those seeking employment, is housed at The Communiversity and operates under the WIOA umbrella.

Our dual enrollment/dual credit program allows eligible high school students to simultaneously enroll in a college course and many students enrolled in the Golden Triangle Early College High School on our Mayhew campus graduate each May with both a high school diploma and a college degree or certificate.

Those are just a few of the areas in which our dedicated faculty and staff at EMCC are making a difference in the lives of those who reside in the communities we serve. I am proud to be a part of that effort.

I am also grateful to our many partners who work alongside us. We could not accomplish the things that we do without their support. Industry representatives sit on craft committees to

ensure that our curriculum aligns with in-demand skills. Our K-12 counterparts work with us to inform their students about available educational opportunities, and local, state and federal officials who represent our district are proactive in addressing the needs of both students and employers.

In October, the FORGE Foundation hosted a skilled trades career fair at The Communiversity in which more than 2,000 8th grade students from 18 area schools learned about careers in skilled trades from more than 35 local employers.

The Golden Triangle Development LINK, the Mississippi Economic Council, AccelerateMS and the Appalachian Regional Commission are a few of the workforce and economic development agencies that have partnered with us this past year and to whom we owe a debt of gratitude.

We are fortunate for the invaluable leadership and guidance of the Mississippi Community College Board and our own EMCC Board of Trustees. EMCC would not be the quality institution it is today without the generosity of our alumni, whose donations fund scholarships, capital building projects and programs in our athletic and academic divisions.

Inside the pages of this magazine, you will read about our efforts through Achieving the Dream to remove barriers to student success, about our continued expansion of course offerings, and about some of our accomplishments on and off the field, to name a few things.

Thanks to our legislators, Board of Trustees and sound fiscal management, we were able to provide eligible employees with historic wage increases this year. In January, the Mississippi Coding Academies opened a hub at The Communiversity, providing tuition-free classes to students, who are certified as full-stack junior coders after 11 months of training.

This past summer, we were able to offer \$500 in tuition assistance to qualified Mississippi residents who enrolled in a minimum of six credit hours. In July, we were named a 2022 Best Places to Work in Mississippi Finalist by the Mississippi Business Journal. Those are just a few of our many accomplishments this past year.

We still have much to do. Our priorities moving forward are to achieve even greater academic excellence through quality instruction and by fostering an atmosphere where students are supported beyond the learning environment. We are looking at ways to optimize our facilities to enhance the student experience.

In closing, I want to thank the faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, and friends of EMCC who support our efforts to continuously improve for the betterment of the students and communities we serve. Go Lions!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "DS Alsobrooks". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Dr. Scott Alsobrooks
EMCC President

INSIDE

Baptist Hospital donates \$100K for nursing scholarship	8
First female grad of Mortuary Science program returns for visit.....	11
Mississippi Coding Academies opens hub at The Communiversity	16
Former EMCC President Dr. Tommy Davis remembered	20
Lions upset Northwest Mississippi for MACCC Football Championship title	24
Foley football field named after EMCC alumnus Lester Smith.....	34
Alumni honored during Homecoming 2022 on Scooba campus	38
In memory of alumni we have lost.....	44

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THE LIONS' PRIDE

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Non Discriminatory Policy

East Mississippi Community College is committed to assuring that the College and its programs are free from discrimination and harassment based upon race, color, ethnicity, sex, pregnancy, religion, national origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, status as a U.S. veteran, or any other status protected by state or federal law. The following offices have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Office of the Director of Human Resources, 1512 Kemper Street, Scooba, MS 39358, 662.476.5274; Office of the Dean of Students Golden Triangle Campus, Disability Services Coordinator, 8731 South Frontage Road, Mayhew, MS 39753, 662.243.1979; Office of the Dean of Students Scooba Campus, Title IX Coordinator, 1512 Kemper Street, Scooba, MS 39358, 662.476.5062.



Tony Montgomery



Gina Cotton



Christina Vernon

Longtime employees lead Development Foundation

Tony Montgomery, who has spent most of his working career at East Mississippi Community College, has been tapped to oversee the college's alumni relations efforts, along with Executive Director of Alumni Affairs and Foundation Operations Gina Cotton and EMCC Administrative Assistant Christina Vernon.

Montgomery, whose official title is Dean of Scooba Campus/College Advancement, wears many hats at EMCC. In addition to his duties as dean of students, he also oversees the Transportation, Facilities & Grounds Management, Campus Police and Food Services departments on the Scooba campus.

In the spring of 2022, Montgomery was additionally named the executive director of College Advancement, filling the duties of Marcus Wood who left EMCC in November 2021 to serve as head football coach at Holmes Community College. Montgomery's new duties include spearheading the EMCC Development Foundation, the fundraising arm that supports academics, athletic programs and capital building projects. He also oversees the Athletics Department.

"Many of the great programs and facilities we have at EMCC are a direct result of the generosity of our alumni and friends," Montgomery said. "EMCC would not be the outstanding institution it is today without their continued support. We are grateful for all they have done and I am looking forward to getting to know our great EMCC alumni better."

Montgomery will work alongside Cotton to coordinate the college's major fundraising events, such as the Wild Game Social and Auction, the Sporting Clays Challenge and the EMCC-Old Waverly Golf Classic.

Montgomery is an EMCC alumnus and 2020 Sports Hall of Fame inductee who played baseball for the college from 1991 to 1993. In 2020, he was inducted into the EMCC Sports Hall of Fame. After earning a Master of Education from Delta State University, Montgomery returned to EMCC where he served eight years as an assistant baseball coach under head coach Bill Baldner.

He also taught night classes and online classes and was eventually promoted to director of housing. In 2004, Montgomery transitioned into administration as assistant dean of students. He later served four years as head baseball coach. After a brief stint as head baseball coach at Columbus High School, Montgomery returned to EMCC as dean of students for the Scooba campus.

Cotton has worked for EMCC since 2008 when she was hired as an assistant to then Dean of Instruction Dr. Teresa Houston. She later worked as administrative assistant to Development Foundation Director Nick Clark, who was later named vice president of Institutional Advancement and Alumni Affairs before retiring.

"I learned a lot about running the Foundation from Nick and I have a lot of respect for him," Cotton said.

Cotton handles the day-to-day operations of the Development Foundation, which includes keeping alumni and financial records, maintaining mailing lists and planning special events. The Foundation coordinates the college's alumni events, such as the Sports Hall of Fame induction ceremony, and Alumnus of the Year and Distinguished Service Award presentations.

"The relationships I have cultivated over the years really mean a lot to me and I have enjoyed getting to know our donors and alumni on a personal level," Cotton said.

Cotton is a graduate of the Golden Triangle Vocational-Technical Center, the precursor to EMCC's Golden Triangle campus. She worked for the Forest Products lab at Mississippi State University and later at the MSU Vet School, taking time off after leaving there to raise her daughters. Cotton later worked at Immanuel Center for Christian Education in Columbus for 10 years before accepting a position at EMCC in 2008.

Vernon is a graduate of EMCC who attended school on the college's Scooba campus. She is the former administrative assistant to EMCC President Dr. Scott Alsobrooks. Vernon grew up in Scooba and resides in Noxubee County with her husband, Kyle, and their 2-year-old son, Miles.

"Christina is an invaluable member of our EMCC Development Foundation team," Cotton said. "We would not be able to accomplish all that we do without her."

Donations sought to convert Wallace Hall into museum

The East Mississippi Community College Development Foundation is seeking donations to renovate Wallace Hall on the Scooba campus and convert it to a museum dedicated to the college's history.

Sports memorabilia, photos and periodicals are among some of the items that will be on display in the museum once it is completed. The Development Foundation has set an initial fundraising goal of \$400,000 for the project.

"To have a place where our alumni can view items on display from their time at EMCC and share those memories with members of their families is really exciting," Dean of the Scooba Campus/ College Advancement Tony Montgomery said. "This is something we have wanted to do for a long time and our goal now is to make it a reality."

Once renovated, the first floor of Wallace Hall will house the museum, while tentative plans call for the second floor to be dedicated to storage space. EMCC has many college artifacts in storage that will be displayed in the museum and



The EMCC Development Foundation is seeking private donations to convert Wallace Hall on the college's Scooba campus into a museum for school artifacts.

donations of other EMCC memorabilia from alumni and their families will be welcome.

The first phase of the project will consist of renovating Wallace Hall and installing an HVAC system and temperature-controlled display cabinets.

"EMCC has a rich history that will be preserved for generations yet to come with the creation of this museum," EMCC Executive Director of Alumni Affairs and Foundation Operations Gina Cotton said.

EMCC's beginnings date back to 1927 when it opened as the Kemper County Agricultural High School, which offered a

13th grade. To commemorate that year, the Development Foundation has launched a "1927 Society Campaign" in which supporters can donate at least \$19.27 a month to become members of the "1927 Society." See page 17 of this magazine for details.

Amazon shoppers can help support the project by shopping online at AmazonSmile, which will donate .5 percent of eligible purchases to the Development Foundation. Find out more on page 35 of this magazine. For more information about EMCC's museum fundraiser, call 662.476.5075 or email Montgomery (tmontgomery@eastms.edu), Cotton (gcotton@eastms.edu) or Christina Sciple Vernon (csciple@eastms.edu).

ALUMNI REPORT

East Mississippi Community College is a special place for those of us who are fortunate enough to be counted among the school's growing list of alumni. Inevitably, whenever I bump into a graduate of EMCC the conversation drifts back to our time at the school and the fond memories we cherish of time spent there. We all tend to agree that we enjoyed our time at EMCC and are appreciative of the quality education we received.

Speak with students attending EMCC today and you will find their experiences are much like our own. They appreciate small class sizes where their teachers know their names and are willing to invest the time to ensure they succeed.

Students often say they feel as if they are being well prepared for the next chapter in their lives, whether that is at a four-

year university or in their chosen fields as nurses, as welders or in any other number of possible career options.

Their optimism is warranted. It is no accident that EMCC was ranked among the Top 10 Colleges in the Nation by SmartAsset for four consecutive years, taking a No. 12, spot the following year. Last year, EMCC was named to the Aspen Institute College Excellence Program's Top 150 Community Colleges in the Nation for the fifth time since 2015 out of a pool of nearly 1,000 public two-year colleges nationwide. Many colleges never make those lists.

Whether it is in the classrooms or on the athletic fields, EMCC has consistently performed above its size. The dedicated faculty, staff and administrators, past and present, who have served EMCC played an outsized role in those successes. You,



Jake Hand

our alumni, can take a bow too.

If it were not for the support of our alumni, EMCC would not have achieved all that it has. Your contributions to the EMCC

Development Foundation and to the college's athletic and academic programs have proven to be a tremendous asset to EMCC. For that, I thank you.

Jake Hand,
EMCC Alumni Association President

WILD GAME SOCIAL AND AUCTION

The "Bull" Sullivan Memorial Division of the EMCC Development Foundation hosted the 19th Annual Billy Joe Cross Wild Game Social and Silent Auction March 4 at the Lion Hills Center. Renasant Bank was the presenting sponsor for the fundraiser to benefit EMCC's academic and athletic programs. Auction items included guns, hunting and vacation packages, collectibles, and signed sports memorabilia, among other things. Wild Game bites and appetizers were served. The next Wild Game Social and Silent Auction will take place March 3, 2023. For more information on the fundraiser or other EMCC Alumni/Development Foundation events, call Gina Cotton at 662.476.5063 or email her at gcotton@eastms.edu.



EMCC ALUMNI

Former EMCC students Sera Beth Briggs, at left, and Brandon Briggs were among the attendees at the 19th Annual Billy Joe Cross Wild Game Social and Silent Auction.



PRESENTING SPONSOR

EMCC Director of Athletics and Dean of Students/Scooba Campus Sharon Thompson, center, visits with Thomas Pound, at left, and Bobby Harper, at right, of Renasant Bank, which was the presenting sponsor for the Wild Game Social and Silent Auction.



LIVE BAND

Former EMCC art instructor Terry Cherry, right foreground, Bobby Thrash, at left, and Ed Girling, far right in the back, provided the musical entertainment for the 19th Annual Billy Joe Cross Wild Game Social and Silent Auction.



GOOD TURNOUT

The Billy Joe Cross Wild Game Social and Silent Auction is one of the popular fundraisers hosted by the "Bull" Sullivan Memorial Division of the EMCC Development Foundation and attracts a good crowd each year.



PRESIDENTS

EMCC President Dr. Scott Alsobrooks, center, with EMCC Development Foundation Board of Directors President Charlie Studdard, at right, and Studdard's wife, Margie Studdard, at left, during the Wild Game Social and Silent Auction.

EMCC SPORTING CLAYS CHALLENGE

East Mississippi Community College's 13th Annual Sporting Clays Challenge took place Friday, May 20, 2022 at Burnt Oak Lodge near Crawford. The event, presented by Galloway-Chandler-McKinney Insurance, benefits the college's academic and athletic programs. Other sponsors included Huck's Place, Sodexo, Mitchell Distributing and Clark Beverage Group. The event featured two competitions, with one held in the morning and the second in the afternoon. The next Sporting Clays Challenge will take place May 19, 2023. For information on future tournaments or other EMCC Alumni/Development Foundation events, please call Gina Cotton at 662.476.5063 or email her at gotton@eastms.edu.



TEAM CHAMPS

Mitchell Distributing was the afternoon shoot winner and overall team champion for the 13th annual Sporting Clays Challenge, busting 352 clays out of a possible 400. Team members are, from left, Alan "Birdog" Hall, Curtis Hilt, Tony Carley and Jeff Honnoll.



PRESENTING SPONSOR

Cecil Vaughan with presenting sponsor Galloway-Chandler-McKinney Insurance prepares to shoot during the 13th Annual Sporting Clays Challenge that took place May 20.



GRAVEL PIT KIDS

Team members of the Gravel Pit Kids who participated in the Sporting Clays Challenge are, from left, Brett Mordecai, Lahndon Townley, Ryan Bates, and Abby McNair.



TAKING AIM

Benny Lawrence with the team of Cocktails To-Go takes aim at one of the shooting stations during the 13th Annual Sporting Clays Challenge at Burnt Oak Lodge.



LUNCH

Lunch for the 13th Annual Sporting Clays Challenge was provided by Huck's Place in Columbus, which has sponsored the midday meal for the event for several years.

EMCC-OLD WAVERLY GOLF CLASSIC

The 27th Annual EMCC-Old Waverly Golf Classic took place Oct. 24 at the Old Waverly Golf Club near West Point. Renasant Bank was the presenting sponsor of the four-man scramble in which nearly 100 people participated. The event returns Oct. 30, 2023. For information on future tournaments or other EMCC Alumni/Development Foundation events, please call Gina Cotton at 662.476.5063 or email her at gcotton@eastms.edu.



OVERALL WINNERS

The first-place winners of the 2022 EMCC-Old Waverly Golf Classic are congratulated by EMCC President Dr. Scott Alsobrooks, far right, and Dean of Scooba Campus/College Advancement Tony Montgomery, far left. The BankFirst team members are, from left, Trent Adams, Rob Autry, Brad Love and Doug Cater.



FORE

Baptist Memorial Hospital-Golden Triangle CEO Paul Cade completes his follow-through during the EMCC-Old Waverly Golf Classic as teammates Thomas Steadman, James Martin and Madison Guyton cheer him on.



PRESENTING SPONSOR

A team representing Renasant Bank, the presenting sponsor for the EMCC-Old Waverly Golf Classic, consisted of, from left, Tommy Tomlinson, EMCC President Dr. Alsobrooks, Hayes Rector and Thomas Pound.



HELPING HANDS

The EMCC-Old Waverly Golf Classic would not be possible without volunteers and EMCC employees such as, from left, former Director of Recruiting Tawana Bauer, Dean of Students and Vice President of Enrollment Management Dr. Melanie Sanders, Foundation Administrative Assistant Christina Vernon and Executive Director of Alumni Affairs and Foundation Operations Gina Cotton.



TEE TIME

Teams participating in the 27th Annual EMCC-Old Waverly Golf Classic wait for the start of the four-man scramble that has grown in popularity over the years. The event is one of the annual fundraisers coordinated by the EMCC Development Foundation.

Eligible EMCC employees receive 'significant pay increase'

This summer, most fulltime East Mississippi Community College faculty received a pay raise of between 8 percent and 9.5 percent, while eligible staff saw a wage increase of about 5 percent.

The raises are the result of an increase in state appropriations by the Mississippi Legislature and contributions from EMCC's general funds approved by the college's Board of Trustees.

"Mississippi legislators really took care of the community colleges this year and I want to extend my sincere gratitude to them for that," EMCC President Dr. Scott Alsobrooks said. "I also want to thank our Board of Trustees for approving additional funds so we could provide our employees a significant pay increase."

The raises come on the heels of an across-the-board raise of about 3 percent for EMCC faculty and staff last year. EMCC Chief Financial Officer Tammie Holmes said this year's wage increase is the largest in the college's recent history.

"We looked back a couple of decades and could not find any raises comparable to this amount," Holmes said.

State appropriations for community colleges are based on enrollment numbers. EMCC was among three community colleges in the state with growth in enrollment during the summer



EMCC President Dr. Scott Alsobrooks, at right, speaks with academic instructors on the college's Golden Triangle campus during a faculty meeting that took place prior to the start of the fall term. Faculty and staff at the college received one of the largest pay raises in recent college history this year.

and fall of 2021, with much of that increase attributed to free summer classes offered to students through federal Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds, which was established in March 2020 as part of the \$2.2 trillion Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act approved by Congress.

As a result of the increased enrollment, EMCC's \$14.45 million appropriation for fiscal year 2023 rose by \$2.1 million from the previous year. The Legislature included pay raises in the allocations for all community colleges in the state for 2023. Of the additional \$2.1 million EMCC received, the Legislature reserved \$600,540 as a line item for raises. The total cost of the raises at EMCC is a little more than \$1 million, with the college

allocating about \$400,000 out of general funds to pay for the remainder of the cost for the raises and fringe benefits, such as contributions to the Public Employees' Retirement System of Mississippi, or PERS.

Both staff and faculty received a base pay increase of 5 percent. Faculty hired before Jan. 2 were eligible for additional pay based on the number of years they worked for the college.

Alsobrooks said the raises are deserved.

"Our students are achieving many wonderful things and that would not be possible without our employees," Alsobrooks said. "I want to recognize our outstanding employees and their continued work to make EMCC the great institution that it is."

EMCC's newest residential hall officially named

EMCC's newest residence hall was officially christened as Kemper Hall during a July ribbon-cutting ceremony on the college's Scooba campus. EMCC President Dr. Scott Alsobrooks and members of both the EMCC Board of Trustees and the Kemper County Board of Supervisors were in attendance. Construction on the 147-bed, three-story Kemper Hall was completed in January 2021.



Conference attendees



EMCC President Dr. Scott Alsobrooks and some members of the college's Board of Trustees attended a statewide conference in Biloxi in July hosted by the Mississippi Association of Community Colleges. Representatives from all Mississippi's community colleges attended the event. Conference topics included leading after a pandemic, current legal issues, challenges in college athletics, legislative priorities, enrollment trends and workforce trends. Pictured here at the conference are Alsobrooks, at center, and, from left, EMCC Board of Trustees Frank Nichols, Spencer Brooks, Evelyn Murray, Hazel Johnson, Ed Mosley and Keith Gaskin.

Baptist Golden Triangle donates \$100K for nursing scholarships

In April, Baptist Memorial Health Care Foundation donated \$100,000 to fund scholarships for East Mississippi Community College students enrolled in Division of Nursing and Health Sciences nursing programs who agree to work for Baptist Memorial Hospital-Golden Triangle in Columbus after they graduate.

The period students will be required to work for the hospital will be based on the total amount of scholarship funds they receive.

“We appreciate the long-standing relationship we have with EMCC and the emphasis they place on their nursing programs. Now more than ever, we depend on our area nursing programs to provide our hospital with graduate nurses who are prepared for the clinical setting and eager to work,” Baptist Golden Triangle Administrator Paul Cade said. “We hope this donation from our Baptist Foundation will provide scholarships to help more students achieve their goal of a career in nursing.”

EMCC President Dr. Scott Alsobrooks initially approached Cade to see how EMCC could help serve the hospital’s need for additional employees in the medical fields. The idea of scholarships was broached and Cade



Baptist Memorial Hospital-Golden Triangle donated \$100,000 to EMCC to fund scholarships for students enrolled in the college’s nursing programs. Last April, Baptist Golden Triangle Administrator Paul Cade, at left, presented a ceremonial check to EMCC President Dr. Scott Alsobrooks.



reached out to Baptist Memorial Health Care Foundation, the nonprofit fundraising arm of Baptist Memorial Health Care.

After meeting with officials at EMCC, the Baptist Foundation agreed to create a \$100,000 scholarship fund, with disbursements to be funneled through the EMCC Development Foundation, EMCC’s nonprofit arm that benefits students and athletic programs.

“We have always had a great partnership with Baptist Golden Triangle, and we are thankful for the donation to create these scholarships,” Alsobrooks said. “This is a win-win situation for everyone. Students

awarded these scholarships will work locally in well-paying jobs after they graduate, which will benefit both the students and the community at large. Baptist Golden Triangle will be able to employ additional workers needed to address a shortage of nurses and allied health workers.”

“These scholarships will make a significant difference in the lives of many of our Division of Nursing and Allied Health students,” EMCC Dean of Scooba / College Advancement Tony Montgomery said.

“We are grateful to Baptist Golden Triangle and the Baptist Memorial Health Care Foundation for this tremendous contribution,” EMCC Executive Director of Alumni Affairs and Foundation Operations Gina Cotton said.

Four named to All-MS Academic Team

Two students from East Mississippi Community College’s Scooba campus and two from the college’s Golden Triangle campus were named to the Phi Theta Kappa 2022 All-Mississippi Academic Team. Nominations are based on academic performance and service to the college and community.



All-Mississippi Academic Team members from EMCC’s Scooba campus are Morgan Moody of Hanford, California, at left, and Kayla Nelson of Macon, who was also named a 2022 Coca-Cola Academic Team Bronze Scholar.



All-Mississippi Academic Team members from EMCC’s Golden Triangle campus are Laura MacLellan of Columbus, at left, and Lindsey Younger of Steens.

EMCC, William Carey sign agreement to expand educational opportunities

An agreement between East Mississippi Community College and William Carey University will make it easier for EMCC students to transition into health care programs offered at William Carey University.

Officials from EMCC and William Carey University attended a ceremonial signing of the agreement May 9 on EMCC's Golden Triangle campus.

Under the agreement, William Carey University will assist EMCC to initiate pre-professional health care programs that include Physical Therapy, Pharmacy, Health Information Management, Health Administration and Education, and Registered Nurse to Bachelor of Science in Nursing, along with other university programs deemed appropriate.

Some credits earned through the Department of Nursing and Health Sciences at EMCC will transfer into programs offered at the William Carey University College of Health Sciences. EMCC students will also be able to take online baccalaureate-level courses taught by faculty at William Carey. Dual enrollment courses will be available to students enrolled in nursing and pre-professional health care courses. The dual enrollment courses will be available at EMCC's tuition rate.

"We are grateful to William Carey University for this opportunity to provide additional educational opportunities to our students," EMCC President Dr. Scott Alsobrooks said. "The first two years of



From left, EMCC President Dr. Scott Alsobrooks, William Carey University President Dr. Ben Burnett and William Carey Associate Vice President of the College of Health Sciences Dr. Janet Williams took part in a May 9 signing of an agreement that will make it easier for EMCC students enrolled in allied health programs to transfer to William Carey.

our programs match up with the first two years of some of the programs offered at William Carey University. This agreement will make it easier for our students to further their education while helping meet a demand for additional employees in the health care industry."

WCU officials present at the ceremonial signing included then Executive Vice President Dr. Ben Burnett, who in August was named president of the university.

"William Carey University is proud to partner with our community colleges in the state of Mississippi as nearly 40 percent of our undergraduate population is made up

of transfer students," Burnett said. "We are always happy to receive community college graduates because we know they have a solid foundation of core requirements in their degree areas. We are particularly excited to sign this second partnership with East Mississippi Community College, which will allow us to expand our mission of serving the communities of Mississippi in the area of health care."

In October 2020, EMCC and WCU signed a memorandum of understanding that makes it easier for EMCC graduates to apply some, if not all, of their technical and academic credits toward a bachelor's degree at WCU.

Presidential Scholar

Tykerria Jones of Starkville, who graduated from EMCC in May, was selected as a winner of the prestigious Presidential Partnership Scholarship at Mississippi State University. Jones was selected by an MSU Scholarship Committee after being nominated by EMCC President Dr. Scott Alsobrooks. The scholarship, which is a competitive award for Phi Theta Kappa honor society students, covers tuition for four semesters.



Military Tribute

Frank Nichols, a member of the EMCC Board of Trustees and former chief of police for the Starkville Police Department, was the guest speaker for "Proud to be an American," EMCC's annual tribute to the military that takes place in November on the college's Golden Triangle campus. Nichols, who was deployed with the U.S. Navy during Operation Desert Shield and with the U.S. Army during Operation Iraqi Freedom III, spoke, among other things, about his time in service and the importance of honor and duty to one's country and fellow citizens.



Homecoming 2022 filled with activities for visitors

EMCC kicked off the annual Homecoming festivities on the Scooba campus with an Oct. 19 parade. The remainder of the Homecoming activities took place Saturday, Oct. 22. There was an alumni reunion for the classes of 1972-79, an alumni reception

and an art show in Aust Hall. Alumni were also treated to lunch and the events ended on a high note when the Lions defeated Itawamba Community College 38-10 during the Homecoming football game. Here are some scenes from Homecoming 2022.



MIGHTY LION BAND ENTERTAINS CROWD

Mighty Lion Band director Chris King, at left, directs the band during halftime of the Lions' Homecoming football game. The band includes the marching band, the EMCC Symphonic Winds, a jazz band, a rock band, a percussion ensemble, a dance team and color guard.



HOMECOMING QUEENS CROWNED

Jada Odneal of Starkville, at right, was crowned Homecoming Queen for EMCC's Scooba campus and McKenzie Middleton of West Point was crowned Homecoming Queen for the Golden Triangle campus Oct. 22 during halftime of the college's football game.



EMCC ALUMNUS RICK FARR HONORED

Family members of EMCC alumnus Richard "Rick" Louis Farr, Jr., who passed away in February of 2022, took to Sullivan-Windham Field during EMCC's Homecoming football game for a tribute to Farr, an EMCC Sports Hall of Fame inductee who played football and baseball for the college. Farr's wife, Sue Sanders Farr, third from right, is holding an EMCC skull and crossbones football helmet presented to her by EMCC head football coach Buddy Stephens.



LUNCH IS SERVED

The EMCC Development Foundation hosted a tailgate luncheon for visiting alumni prior to the start of the Homecoming football game. Tents and tables were set up adjacent to the picnic pavilion outside Sullivan-Windham Field.



ALUMNI WELCOMED DURING RECEPTION

A reception for EMCC alumni took place in the dining room of the F.R. Young Student Union during Homecoming 2022. During the reception, Alumnus of the Year and Distinguished Service Award recipients were honored.

1977 graduate first female to complete Mortuary Science program

Mortuary Science was a male-dominated field when Cindy Mattox enrolled in the program 46 years ago at then East Mississippi Junior College.

“Nobody believed me when I told them I was enrolled in Mortuary Science,” she said. “There was one other girl in the class and she dropped out. I completed the course and was the first female graduate of the program.”

That was in 1977 and Mattox, who was Cindy Gossett at the time, took and passed her state board exam to become licensed in the field. Mattox attended an Oct. 22 alumni reunion on EMCC’s Scooba campus that coincided with the school’s Homecoming activities.

Mattox said she believes the Mortuary Science program had just started under the direction of instructor John Wooten when she enrolled at the college. A look back through the Lion yearbooks confirms that Wooten and the Mortuary Science program are first listed in 1975.

The program has grown in both size and popularity since Mattox’s time at the college and is now known as the Funeral

Service Technology program. Graduates are qualified upon passing the state board to become funeral service practitioners who are dually licensed as embalmers and funeral directors.

“I looked the program up online and saw pictures of a lot of girls enrolled in the program now, which is great,” Mattox said.

While in high school at East Lowndes Academy in Columbus, Mattox was interested in a career in medicine. Shortly after graduating, a friend who worked at a Columbus funeral home invited her to observe an embalming.

“It was fascinating,” Mattox said. “I looked at the medical aspect of it and learned a lot. I said to myself, ‘I’m going to do this.’ I looked to see where the nearest mortuary school was and when I learned it was in Scooba I thought, ‘You are kidding me. That’s right down the road.’”

While at EMJC, Mattox met her husband, Benny Mattox, a Kemper County native who was enrolled in the Forestry Program offered at that time. After graduation, they married and had two children. Cindy Mattox accepted a position as an operating



Cindy Mattox, Class of 1977, was the first female graduate of then East Mississippi Junior College’s Mortuary Science program, the precursor to today’s Funeral Service Technology program.

room technician, which she did for a while, and went back to school to continue her education.

Last May, she retired after 18 years as a 5th grade science teacher for the Montgomery, Alabama public school system. She and her husband reside in Prattville, Alabama. They have five grandchildren.

“I had two wonderful years at EMCC and the science I learned stayed with me throughout my career,” Cindy Mattox said. “Mortuary Science was not an easy program of study. There were a lot of science and chemistry classes. That kind of led me down the path to where I am today.”

Alumni reunion convened during EMCC Homecoming

More than 50 alumni representing the classes of 1972 to 1979 at what was then East Mississippi Junior College attended a reunion on the college’s Scooba campus Oct. 22. The reunion coincided with EMCC’s Homecoming activities that day.



About 30 of the more than 50 alumni from the classes of 1972 to 1979 who attended an Oct. 22 reunion on EMCC’s Scooba campus are pictured here. The alumni took part in EMCC’s Homecoming activities, which were held that day.



A reunion for former students of East Mississippi Junior College who attended the school in the 1970s took place Oct. 22 in the Orr Center for Christian Activity on EMCC’s Scooba campus.



Alumni who attended then East Mississippi Junior College in the 1970s look over memorabilia from their time at the school. For some of the attendees, it was their first visit to EMCC since they graduated.

EMCC Development Foundation scholarships benefit many students

East Mississippi Community College Development Foundation student scholarships are established and funded through private donations by individuals, organizations and business or industry partners.

“A great number of our students are provided financial assistance through these scholarships each year,” EMCC Dean of Scooba Campus/College Advancement Tony Montgomery said. “We are grateful to those who make these scholarships possible.”

The dollar amount awarded through each of the scholarships varies and depends upon available funds. Those who endow the scholarships help establish the criteria, such as GPA or area of study, used to determine student eligibility.

Students must be enrolled fulltime at EMCC to be eligible for a Development Foundation scholarship. The deadline to apply is August 1.

Here is a list of available scholarships:

Anita Sharma Scholarship

Dr. Hari Sharma established this scholarship in memory of his wife, Anita. Priority will be given to a female student who is majoring in math and science related fields. Recipients must demonstrate a financial need.

AT&T Endowed Scholarship

AT&T established this scholarship endowment. Recipients must maintain a 3.0 grade point average or better and demonstrate financial need.

Bessie Duke Carter-Annie Haughey Carter Morgan Endowed Music Scholarship

Ms. Betty Morgan Benton established this scholarship endowment in memory of her mother and grandmother. Priority will be given to a music major or participant in a music program. Recipients must have a minimum ACT score of 18 and maintain a 2.75 grade point average.

Box Family Scholarship

Charles S. Box established this scholarship endowment. Recipients must maintain a 3.0

grade point average or higher and demonstrate financial need.

Carl M. (Buck) Hildreth Memorial Scholarship

Mr. & Mrs. J.W. Hildreth and Mr. & Mrs. David Schoggen established this scholarship in memory of Carl M. (Buck) Hildreth. First priority will be given to a resident of Lowndes County in Mississippi. If there are no applicants from Lowndes County, a qualifying student from another Mississippi county may be selected. The recipient must be enrolled in the Funeral Service Technology program, maintain a minimum 2.5 grade point average and demonstrate financial need.

Columbus Light and Water Diversity Scholarship

Columbus Light and Water established this scholarship to be awarded to former students of the Columbus Municipal School District who enroll in the noncredit Heavy Civil Construction or Utility Lineworker Technology programs. Recipients must be first-time college students who attend EMCC full time.

Dennis D. and Leola K. Cowart Nursing Scholarship

This scholarship was established by the Cowart family in memory of Dennis Cowart and to honor the profession of Leola Cowart. This scholarship was established to assist a deserving nursing student who demonstrates a financial need.

Dr. Rick Young Endowed Scholarship

Dr. and Mrs. John Clay established this scholarship endowment in honor of Dr. Rick Young. Recipients must maintain a 3.5 grade point average and demonstrate financial need.

Eddie Al and Cheryl Sparkman Scholarship

Eddie Al and Cheryl Sparkman established

this scholarship to assist a full-time student who is a resident of Kemper County and is enrolled in an academic or career-technical program on the Scooba campus. The recipient must have graduated from either Kemper County High School or Kemper Academy, maintain a minimum grade point average of 3.0 and demonstrate financial need.

Forbus Family Scholarship

Jack Forbus established this scholarship in honor of his parents, who met and fell in love on the Scooba campus. Recipients must demonstrate financial need, have a strong work ethic, show leadership skills and maintain a 2.5 grade point average.



East Mississippi Community College's Development Foundation offers numerous scholarship opportunities to students that are made possible through private donations. In this EMCC file photo, students register at Lion Central on EMCC's Golden Triangle campus.

Hitt Family Scholarship

A scholarship in memory of Rod Hitt has been established by his children Craig Hitt and Connie Joyner, who both received associate degrees from EMCC. This scholarship will be awarded to a graduate of West Lauderdale High School enrolled in the Forestry program or other technical programs offered on EMCC's Scooba campus. Recipients must maintain a 2.0 or better grade point average. Should there not be an eligible student from West Lauderdale, graduates from other Lauderdale County schools may be considered.

Hope Dulaney Meacham Endowed Scholarship

John Meacham, Jr. established this scholarship endowment to honor Hope

Dulaney Meacham for her distinguished serviced to EMCC. Recipients, who may be either academic or career-technical students, must be residents of Mississippi and maintain a 2.0 grade point average.

Janan L. Rush Scholarship

The Rush family established this scholarship in memory of Janan Rush, a popular instructor who oversaw the Surgical Technology program. The Janan L. Rush Scholarship will be awarded annually to a second semester student who exemplifies dedication, resiliency and commitment to growing in the field. Recipients must maintain a 2.5 grade point average.

John D. Gerhart Endowed Scholarship

John D. Gerhart established this scholarship endowment in order to help deserving students. Preference will be given to a student on EMCC's Scooba campus. Recipients must maintain a 2.0 grade point average and demonstrate financial need.

John G. Hopper Endowed Scholarship

Mr. and Mrs. Grady Hopper established this scholarship endowment in memory of their son, Joseph Grady Hopper. The scholarship will be awarded annually to an academic major on the Scooba campus. Recipients must have a minimum 22 ACT score and maintain a 3.0 grade point average.

Joshua Reed Line Worker Endowed Scholarship

The family of Joshua Reed established this scholarship in memory of Joshua, a recent EMCC graduate. The scholarship will be awarded to a student enrolled in the Utility Lineworker Technology program. Recipients must maintain a 2.5 grade point average and demonstrate financial need, with preference given to a Winston County resident.

Lucy Hull Endowed Scholarship

Dewayne Hull established this scholarship endowment in memory of his wife, Lucy Hull. The scholarship will be awarded annually to a sophomore pursuing an academic major on the Scooba campus. Recipients must be nominated by an EMCC faculty member, maintain a 2.5 grade point average and demonstrate financial need and leadership skills.

Madie Peden Light Endowed Scholarship

Established by Margaret Pansy Light in memory of her mother, Madie Peden Light,

To donate to an existing scholarship or to create a new one in memory or honor of someone, call the Development Foundation Office at 662.476.5063 or 662.476.5025, or email EMCC Director of Alumni Affairs and Foundation Operations Gina Cotton at gcotton@eastms.edu or Administrative Assistant Christina Sciple Vernon at csciple@eastms.edu.

recipients of this scholarship must be a sophomore resident of Mississippi who maintains a 2.0 grade point average or better.

Mississippi Organization for Associate Degree Nursing (M-OADN)

The M-OADN established this scholarship endowment to assist an Associate Degree Nursing student in good standing who is also a member of the student organization. The recipient must maintain a 3.0 grade point average, with preference given to a student with financial need.

MTED Veterans Scholarship

Starkville Bridges Out of Poverty and Phillips Financial established this scholarship to help returning veterans attend technical school after serving our country. Preference will be given to veterans from Oktibbeha County who have been deployed and served in the Middle East. Recipients must demonstrate a financial need.

Oneta P. Baker Endowed Scholarship

Mrs. Oneta P. Baker was a 1942 graduate of EMJC. She established this scholarship endowment as a way to give back to future generations. Recipients must maintain a 3.0 grade point average and demonstrate financial need.

Ray Gildon Excellence in Automotive Technology Endowed Scholarship

Jimmy Galloway established this scholarship endowment as a gift to his wife, Pam, in memory of her father, Ray Gildon. Students must be pursuing a degree or certificate in Automotive Technology, maintain a 3.0 grade point average and demonstrate financial need.

Rick Young Eliminating Barriers to Education Scholarship

The family of Dr. Rick Young established this annual scholarship in his honor. Recipients must maintain a 2.5 grade point average or higher and demonstrate financial need.

Rogers Phi Theta Kappa, Eta Upsilon Chapter Scholarship

Mrs. Debra Sullivan established this scholarship in memory of her aunt, Ruth Rogers, a former librarian at EMCC, and her husband, Pat Rogers. This scholarship is established in order to help a deserving Phi Theta Kappa student who demonstrates a financial need.

Shaku Shaunak Scholarship

Dr. Raj Shaunak and his family established this scholarship in memory of his sister, Shaku. Priority will be given to a female student majoring in a manufacturing technology program. Recipients must demonstrate financial need and maintain a 2.0 grade point average.

T. L. Cloar, Jr. Endowed Scholarship

T. L. Cloar, Jr. endowed this scholarship awarded to a student who maintains a 3.0 grade point average and demonstrates a financial need.

The Pilot Club of Columbus Scholarship

The Pilot Club of Columbus, MS established this scholarship to assist an incoming freshman from Lowndes County enrolled at EMCC's Golden Triangle campus. Preference will be given to a student pursuing a career dealing with brain related injuries and/or disabilities. Recipients must apply for all state and federal assistance and demonstrate financial need.

TIC Endowed Scholarship

The Industrial Company established this scholarship endowment for students entering the industrial maintenance and construction fields of study. Scholarship recipients must maintain a 2.0 grade point average or better.

William "Will" W. Botts, Jr. Endowed Scholarship

William Botts, Jr. established this scholarship endowment in order to help deserving students who attended and graduated high school in Kemper County. Recipients must attend the Scooba campus, major in a mathematics and science field and maintain a 3.0 grade point average.

Volunteer work big part of EMCC alumnus' life

After he retired, East Mississippi Community College alumnus Joe Howle spent a lot of time as a volunteer designing homes for the Columbus-Lowndes Habitat for Humanity, where he was a former member of the board.

When relief workers with the Mennonite Disaster Service arrived in Columbus to help repair homes damaged in February 2019 by an EF3 tornado, Howle offered to help.

"I wound up doing some design work for them," Howle said of the agency that recruits and organizes volunteers to repair and rebuild homes impacted by disasters in the U.S. and Canada.

During that time, Howle became friends with Jerry Klassen, a disaster response coordinator with the Mennonite Disaster Service.

"I told him if they needed design help when they were rebuilding a home to give me a call, and he would," Howle said. "They would call me from different parts of the country wanting to know if I could do a house plan for them. I have my own Auto Cad system at my home, and I would design the plans and we would email back and forth until it was complete."

He designed homes on the coast that would withstand hurricane force winds and even offered to design two homes in South Korea.

"I enjoyed that because they use metric measurements over there and we were back and forth with metric and the standard measurements we use over here," Howle said.

During his time with Habitat for Humanity, Howle did a lot of work designing homes for people with handicaps.

"I would meet with the handicap person to see what exactly what was needed and I would design the house to fit that person," Howle said. "For those in wheelchairs, you must make sure they can get around the homes with no problems. You have to make sure there are roll-in showers, and the bathrooms have to be bigger. There are a lot of small things you never think about that must be changed, like different height cabinets."

The needs of handicapped people are something Howle knows about. He has been confined to a wheelchair since 1963 when he fell from the water tower on the Scooba campus of what was then East Mississippi Junior College at the age of 19. Howle and another



Columbus resident Joe Howle was 19 when he fell from the water tower on the Scooba campus of then East Mississippi Junior College, but he did not let the accident slow him down.

person were painting over graffiti on the tower and putting up new "EMJC" letters when the accident happened.

"I was coming down from the water tower one afternoon, slipped and fell and broke my back," he said.

The old water tower was demolished Oct. 30, 2020.

Howle, who played baritone saxophone, trumpet and French horn, was attending EMJC on a band scholarship and was a sophomore at the college when the accident occurred. After he was released from the hospital, Howle studied drafting at a rehabilitation center in Hot Springs, Arkansas, that provided training and career preparation programs for people with disabilities.

He worked at Columbus Marble Works designing novelty automobile license plates before accepting a drafting job at Columbus Air Force Base's 14th Civil Engineering Division, starting out as a draftsman and working his way up to a supervisor's position.

In 1996, Howle was named the command's Outstanding Federal Employees with Disabilities award winner.

"I really enjoyed it," Howle said of his time at the base.

He has since retired and resides in Columbus with his wife, Judy. Among other things, the couple enjoy traveling together. Howle, who is 79, has had an active life.

"I even built a log house and did a lot of work on it myself," he said. "I have done a little bit of everything since I was hurt. I didn't let my injury slow me down."



Alumnus is acclaimed poet

EMCC alumnus and internationally recognized poet Charles Thomas "C.T." Salazar was the guest lecturer Oct. 27 for instructor Marilyn Ford's Creative Writing class. Salazar spoke about poetry and his foray into creative writing that began at EMCC more than a decade ago under Ford's tutelage. Salazar was recently named among nine finalists for the 2023 Roethke Poetry Award for his debut collection of works titled "Headless John the Baptist Hitchhiking." Salazar is the author of three chapbooks and is the 2020 recipient of the Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters award in poetry.



2022 Homecoming Court recognized

EMCC's 2022 Homecoming Court includes students from the college's Golden Triangle and Scooba campuses. They were presented during halftime of EMCC's Homecoming game. This group shot of the court was taken prior to Homecoming. The members are, front row, from left, Madelynne Goodson, Nadia Arellano, Jada Odneal, Jayanna Coleman, Aislynn Cochran, Sydney Pierce and Aayanna Coleman. In the back row, from left, are Madison McCarter, Kaitlyn Freeman, Shaniyah Calhoun, Lauren Wooldridge, Cameron Boone, McKenzie Middleton and Za'Hayia Thompson.



Mr., Miss EMCC chosen for campuses



(Above photo) Joshua Aka, at right, and Zipporia Henderson were chosen as the Mr. and Miss EMCC representatives for the college's Scooba campus. Aka, of Starkville, is an All-MACCC football selection from the Lions' football team who is majoring in kinesiology. Henderson, of Meridian, is a student ambassador who is majoring in physical therapy/sports medicine.



(Below photo) The Mr. and Miss EMCC representatives for the college's Golden Triangle campus are Tucker Loper, at right, and McKenzie Middleton. Loper of Pelahatchie is a student ambassador on the college's Golden Triangle campus. McKenzie of West Point is also a student ambassador and is majoring in biochemistry and pre-optometry.



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Mississippi Coding Academies opens hub at The Communiversity

Mississippi Coding Academies is providing tuition-free classes to students at The Communiversity at East Mississippi Community College.

Upon completion of the 11-month program, students are certified as full-stack junior coders with skills needed to manage websites on both the front end — comprised of those areas users see and interact with — and the back end, which is the underlying digital structure that keeps websites operating smoothly and efficiently.

“Our certificate has been accepted by the state of Mississippi in lieu of an associate degree for someone hiring into the Mississippi IT field,” Mississippi Coding Academies Chairman Mike Forster said. “Our students can migrate directly into a good paying job if they want to or they could complete the requirements at EMCC to earn an associate degree, which is one of the reasons we are so excited to have a location at The Communiversity.”

EMCC offers associate degrees in Computer Networking, Computer Programming, Cybersecurity and Database Administration. Students enrolled in technical education programs at EMCC can also transfer credits earned toward a Bachelor of Applied Science degree at Mississippi State University thanks to a memorandum of understanding signed between the two institutions of higher learning in 2020.

“We are delighted to host the Mississippi Coding Academies here,” EMCC President Dr. Scott Alsobrooks said. “The Communiversity was funded and designed for this very reason — to host programs like this that are training students for the jobs of today and tomorrow that will provide them with the ability to earn a good wage while providing a skilled workforce needed to attract new businesses to Mississippi.”

Forster is a founding member of the Mississippi Coding Academies, which also has two locations in Jackson and another in Biloxi. The academy’s classes at The Communiversity began in January of 2022.

“I always felt a central location in the Golden Triangle would make a lot of sense and every time I would drive by this beautiful building that is The Communiversity, I would think, ‘That is the perfect location for our Golden Triangle academy,’” Forster said.

Mississippi Coding Academies is a nonprofit 501(c)3 agency funded through private donations. Contributors include the W.K.



Students enrolled in the Mississippi Coding Academies program at EMCC’s Communiversity work on their classroom assignments.

Kellogg Foundation, AT&T, C Spire and Ergon, to name a few. The agency has maintained a presence in the Golden Triangle area since its inception. It was initially located in office space within the Columbus Municipal School District before moving to Mississippi State University.

Between 60 percent and 70 percent of students who enroll at the academy are recent high school graduates, Forster said. The remainder of the students are comprised of those with two or four-year degrees who are seeking new career paths or want to add to their skillsets, he said.

In addition to coding, the students are also taught soft skills, such as developing good work habits and being a team player. Forster said the employment rate for the program’s graduates is 90 percent, with about a third to half of each graduating class landing jobs as coders and developers, with the remainder hired in IT support roles, such as working on a help desk.

“We start our kids off on front end stuff,” Forster said. “There is still a good demand for website development and maintenance and things of that nature, so they have a marketable skill after about three months. As we get deeper into the curriculum, it’s databases and programming and systems work.”

GTECHS celebrates start of the school year

Seniors at the Golden Triangle Early College High School, which is located on EMCC’s Mayhew campus, are greeted by lowerclassmen during a Senior Stroll at the beginning of the fall term. GTECHS, which was founded in 2015, is Mississippi’s first early college high school. Students at GTECHS take both their regular high school classes and college courses at EMCC, which assumed administrative control of the high school in 2021.



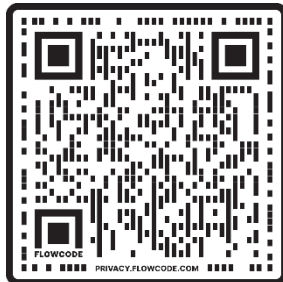


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EMCC Class of 2022 Sports Hall of Fame inductees were recognized at halftime during EMCC's Sept. 29 home game. The inductees are accompanied by EMCC Director of Athletics & Dean of Students/Scooba Campus/College Advancement Sharon Thompson, far left, EMCC President Dr. Scott Alsobrooks, second from left, and Dean of Scooba Campus/College Advancement Tony Montgomery, far right. The inductees are, from left, Bill Baldner, Tom Hostetler, Aaron Fox and Quincy Jackson. Not pictured is inductee Denico Autry.

EMCC Class of 2022 Sports Hall of Fame inductees honored

Five new members were inducted into East Mississippi Community College's Sports Hall of Fame during a Sept. 29 reception in the F.R. Young Student Union prior to the home game against Northwest Mississippi Community College, which was followed by a tailgate social event. The inductees were also recognized during halftime of the football game.

EMCC's Sports Hall of Fame Class of 2022 is headed by current Tennessee Titans veteran NFL defensive lineman Denico Autry, who was a two-year starter (1992-93) for the Mississippi State Bulldogs after being selected NJCAA All-American First Team for the 2011 national champion EMCC Lions. Autry, who was preparing for a game, was the sole recipient who was unable to attend the Sports Hall of Fame induction events.

Retired EMCC and Lamar School baseball coach/administrator Bill Baldner and former three-sport Meridian High School standout and two-way EMCC football all-American Aaron Fox are also members of EMCC's 2022 Sports Hall of Fame induction class. Rounding out the inductees are Illinois native Tom Hostetler, also a member of the Delta State University Athletics Hall of Fame as a standout pitcher, and former Alabama Crimson Tide wide receiver Quincy Jackson.

EMCC SPORTS HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2022

DENICO AUTRY
Football (2010-11)

Denico Autry is a nine-year veteran NFL defensive lineman who was a member of EMCC's first NJCAA national championship



EMCC's Class of 2022 Sports Hall of Fame inductees include current Tennessee Titans defensive lineman Denico Autry, who was preparing for a game and was unable to attend the induction ceremony. Autry, a member of the Lions' 2011 national championship team, celebrates a state championship win that year in this EMCC file photo.

team in 2011. He is currently in his second season with the NFL's Tennessee Titans after spending three seasons (2018-20) with Indianapolis and four years (2014-17) with Oakland.

He entered the current NFL season with 248 career tackles, including 39.5 quarterback sacks, and eight career blocked kicks on special teams. He collected 141 total tackles, 16.5 sacks and 24 tackles for loss during his two EMCC seasons (2010-11).

He tabbed NJCAA All-American First Team as a sophomore after totaling 81 tackles, 11 sacks and 13 TFLs during the Lions' 12-0 season in 2011. The Albemarle, N.C., native went on to start 23 of 26 games played at Mississippi State University with 73 total tackles, 16 tackles for loss and six sacks in two seasons (2012-13) with the Bulldogs.

BILL BALDNER Baseball Coach (1985-2006)

Bill Baldner guided EMCC's baseball program for 22 seasons (1985-2006), producing more than 400 career wins before capping his 25-year EMCC career with a three-year stint as the school's assistant athletic director.

He enjoyed his greatest success with the Lions by earning Region 23 Coach of the Year honors after leading the 1986 EMCC squad to a 37-16 record, region championship, state runner-up finish and No. 16 final national ranking. Half of Baldner's EMCC teams participated in postseason tournament play with the 1994 Lions finishing fifth in the region and his 1998 division-winning club having hosted the conference tournament.

Baldner guided Lamar School's 1985 baseball team to the school's first-ever state championship in any sport. He was selected baseball team captain as a senior at Ohio University. Baldner honed his coaching skills under the guidance of Hall of Fame Mississippi State baseball coach Ron Polk.

AARON FOX Football (1985-86)

Aaron Fox was a two-way football standout who came to the Scooba campus following a successful all-around prep career as a three-sport letterman in football, basketball and track & field at Meridian High School.



EMCC's Class of 2022 Sports Hall of Fame includes, from left, Aaron Fox, Quincy Jackson, Bill Baldner and Tom Hostetler. Not pictured is inductee Denico Autry.

He capped his EMCC football career by being tabbed 1986 NJCAA All-American First Team as a sophomore split end after earning honorable mention all-state recognition as a freshman defensive end. Fox led the Mississippi junior college ranks with 42 receptions for 747 yards (17.8 yds/rec) and seven touchdowns to also earn NJCAA All-Region 23 and MJCAA All-State honors.

He participated in the 1986 Mississippi Junior College All-Star football game after being named the North Division's Most Valuable Lineman. Fox continued his collegiate football career at Fort Hays State in Kansas and currently resides in Katy, Texas. His son, De'Aaron, plays for the NBA's Sacramento Kings after playing collegiately at the University of Kentucky.

TOM HOSTETLER Baseball (1985)

Tom Hostetler was EMCC's top pitcher on the Lions' winningest baseball team ever and most recent conference championship ball club. The right-hander went 10-4 to earn all-state and team MVP honors for EMCC's 41-16 squad in 1985.

Hostetler continued his collegiate career by playing two seasons for Hall of Fame head coach Dave "Boo" Ferriss at Delta State University. He earned DSU's Most Outstanding Pitcher honor twice and was named an ABCA All-American in 1987. Hostetler was inducted into Delta State's Athletics Hall of Fame in 2015.

He was chosen in the eighth round of

the 1987 Major League Baseball Draft by the San Francisco Giants and went on to register a career pitching record of 46-22 during a six-year pro career in the minor leagues. Hostetler moved back to his home state of Illinois following his baseball career and has served the past 27 years as an officer within the Addison Police Department.

QUINCY JACKSON Football (1995-96)

Quincy Jackson is an Alabama native who collected NJCAA All-American Honorable Mention status as a sophomore wide receiver for EMCC. He had 43 receptions for 1,170 yards and 12 touchdowns to help lead the 1996 Lions to an 8-2 overall record.

Jackson continued his collegiate career at the University of Alabama, where he totaled 77 catches for 1,093 receiving yards and seven touchdowns in two seasons (1997-98). A 1998 Senior Bowl selection, Jackson was ranked among the top-20 all-time best wide receivers in Alabama Crimson Tide football history by Ranker.com.

He signed as a free agent with the NFL's Cincinnati Bengals in 1999 but instead made a name for himself playing a total of eight seasons of pro football that were divided among multiple teams affiliated with several different leagues, including the Canadian Football League, the inaugural XFL, the Arena Football League, and the American Indoor Football Association.



Former EMCC President Dr. Tommy Davis is pictured here at an away game for the Lions' football team. Davis was a regular supporter of EMCC athletic events long after he retired in 2004.

Former EMCC President Dr. Tommy Davis remembered fondly

Dr. Thomas L. "Tommy" Davis, Jr. – who passed away July 5 at the age of 88 – is remembered as the president who brought East Mississippi Community College from the brink of closure to the fastest-growing, two-year school in the state.

In the months since he passed, his family says the same characteristics which endeared him to the EMCC community were true in his personal life as well.

Davis is survived by his wife, the former Rita Chatham, sons Thomas L. Davis, III (Sarah) and Jonathan E. Davis, three sisters, two brothers and numerous other family members and friends.

Sons Jon and Tommy said all of the tributes which poured in for their father in the days and months since his passing could not have been more accurate.

"In thinking about all the adjectives

I've heard used to describe Daddy: intelligent, loyal, dedicated, humorous, talented, compassionate, and generous to name just a few," Jon Davis said. "I realized those are the same qualities he passed on to us.

"He and Momma led by example in their professional lives and parented by example at home. Any good qualities Tommy and I possess are attributed to their selfless dedication to their family. We are so honored to call him Daddy."

"We still hear from so many people today, and so many he touched during his time at EMCC," Tommy Davis, III, said. "He is missed daily by us all."

Davis, whose relationship with EMCC spanned parts of eight decades, came to Scooba on a football scholarship in the 1950s and continued lending his support to the school well into the 21st century.

“One of the first things that comes to mind with Dr. Davis is tenure and the respect he was given by so many people around Mississippi,” EMCC President Dr. Scott Alsobrooks said. “He had such a great reputation around the state and was so well-liked. He was popular with everyone you come across.”

“He led the college through unprecedented growth and through some very difficult times and he set a very high standard for us and community colleges across the state,” Alsobrooks said. “His legacy at EMCC will never be forgotten.”

Davis took over with EMCC facing closure, but grew the school from approximately 1,000 students when he became president in 1990 to more than 4,000 when he retired in 2004.

“He came to our college at a time when closure seemed inevitable and he often said that ‘God was not ready for the college to close,’” Dr. Rick Young said. “With a strong love for his alma mater and a tireless work ethic, not only did he save EMCC from closure but grew it to become one of the best community colleges in the nation. Dr. Davis was arguably the best president to ever serve East Mississippi Community College.”

Young worked for EMCC for 40 years and took over as president when Davis retired in 2004. He praised Davis’ intelligence, down-to-earth approach, style of leadership and love for the school.

“He was the right man at the right time,” Young said. “He established credibility and financial stability and gave us the foundation we needed.”

“I was blessed to have had the privilege to work and learn under his leadership. I will always associate Dr. Davis and Rita as the heart and soul of EMCC.”

A state senate resolution adopted in 2003 applauded Davis for saving the school.

“Dr. Davis had the threat of closure removed, changed the financial condition of the college, improved the public image of the college and the morale of its faculty and staff, resumed discontinued programs and activities such as sports and the arts,” the resolution read. “He also succeeded in fostering a sense of common purpose among the Scooba and Golden Triangle campuses and the extension centers that has resulted in a stronger, more unified college.”



Dr. Tommy Davis signs a copy of Mike Frascogna Jr.'s book, "Bull Cyclone Sullivan and the Lions of Scooba, Mississippi" in this 2010 file photo. Davis played football for Sullivan, an EMCC coaching legend from the 1950s and 60s.

A number of EMCC employees were both students and staff members under Davis, including Dean of Scooba Campus/College Advancement Tony Montgomery.

“I spent many times sitting in Dr. Davis’ office just chatting about life,” Montgomery said. “He always had time for anyone who needed him. It was truly a privilege to have been both a student and employee under his leadership. Dr. Davis will be missed terribly, but never forgotten.”

Davis’ 14-year tenure as EMCC president was highlighted not only by tremendous enrollment growth, but the addition of much-needed facilities on both campuses and the creation of new programs and activities.

The Davis Administration Building on the Scooba campus is named in his honor, and Davis was the college’s Distinguished Service Award recipient and Alumnus of the Year in 2004. He is a 2002 member of the EMCC Sports Hall of Fame and was inducted into the Mississippi Community and Junior College Sports Hall of Fame in 2016.

Among numerous other career honors and accolades, Davis served as president of the Mississippi Association of Community and Junior Colleges and was a board member for the Southern Association of Community and Technical Colleges, Community Colleges of Appalachia and the

prestigious Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

In 2002, Davis was honored by the Mississippi National Guard at Camp Shelby for his support of the military and armed forces.

The eldest of eight children, Davis was born in Prentiss County Jan. 5, 1934. He played tight end and defensive end at EMJC under legendary football coach Bob “Bull” Sullivan and received his undergraduate degree from Mississippi College.

Davis later earned a master’s degree from the University of Southern Mississippi and a doctorate in educational administration from Mississippi State University.

A member of the Mississippi Association of Coaches Hall of Fame, Davis coached in-state at Pachuta, Meridian, Heidelberg and Columbia; out of state in suburban St. Louis; and collegiately at Louisiana College and Holmes Community College.

An avid hunter and fisherman, Davis was a loyal supporter of EMCC after retirement and was active in his church as a deacon and Sunday school teacher.

Funeral services were held July 7 at Robert Barham Family Funeral Home in Meridian, with a private family interment following the funeral at Green Valley Cemetery in Jasper County.

The family of Dr. Davis continues to ask that memorial contributions in his memory be made to the Chapel in the Pines c/o EMCC Development Foundation (P.O. Box 158, Scooba, Miss., 39358) and/or to the Tommy Davis Sunday School Class c/o First Baptist Church Meridian (701 26th Ave., Meridian, Miss., 39301).



Dr. Tommy Davis, far right, is pictured here at an EMCC-Old Waverly Golf Classic in West Point with his wife, Rita, far left, and EMCC alumnus Ike Hopper, at center. Hopper passed away in 2018 and Davis died last July.

Faculty, staff garner 'Employee of the Month' awards

Each month, an East Mississippi Community College faculty or staff member is chosen as Employee of the Month out of a pool of candidates nominated by his or her peers.

The person selected for the recognition receives a shirt, a \$25 gift certificate and a plaque commemorating his or her selection as a Raleigh Wood, III, Memorial Employee of the Month Award recipient.

The award was created in memory of the late Raleigh Wood, III, an EMCC 2018 Sports Hall of Fame inductee who passed away in September of 2019. Wood played baseball for EMCC from 1981-83.

Raleigh Wood's wife, Meg Wood, his mother, Opal Wood, and his three brothers, Andy Wood, Joe Wood and Marcus Wood, were instrumental in establishing the employee recognition award. Recipients of the award are also treated to lunch and their photos are displayed on EMCC's digital billboards in Scooba and at The Communiversity and the Lion Hills Center.

Here are the Employee of the Month award winners from August 2021 to July 2022:

AUGUST 2021

Atlas Mumphard is a member of the maintenance crew on EMCC's residential campus in Scooba where he helps with the upkeep of the grounds and athletic fields. He has worked at EMCC since April of 2003.



Atlas Mumphard

SEPTEMBER 2021

Marilyn Maddox is an academic advisor on EMCC's Golden Triangle campus who has worked for the college since 2002. She is also the on-campus ACT test coordinator for the Golden Triangle campus and serves on the college's Accessibility Resource Services Committee.



Marilyn Maddox

OCTOBER 2021

Kimberly Miller handles purchasing for the college's Workforce and Community Services division and the Career Technical department. She is also the event coordinator at The Communiversity, where her office is located, and is the Workforce WESS administrator and accounts coordinator.



Kimberly Miller

NOVEMBER 2021

Carly Stokes is a graduate of EMCC who works as an administrative assistant and receptionist on the college's Scooba campus. She has worked for EMCC for seven years.



Carly Stokes



Cheryl Hubbard

DECEMBER 2021

Cheryl Hubbard is the director of the Lion Hills Center & Golf Course in Columbus, a full-service recreation center with a golf course, tennis courts, swimming pool and banquet and dining facilities. The facility also boasts a learning center that houses educational programs. Hubbard has worked for EMCC since 2008.

JANUARY 2022

EMCC Campus Police Department Assistant Chief Barry Johnson, Sr., has worked for EMCC for more than five years. He is responsible for overseeing the department's efforts at EMCC's Golden Triangle campus, The Communiversity, the West Point-Clay County Center and the Lion Hills Center.



Barry Johnson, Sr.

FEBRUARY 2022

Abby Jenkins serves as athletic academic advisor, compliance assistant and director of dual enrollment on EMCC's Scooba campus. EMCC's student-athletes have received numerous academic awards during her tenure as athletic academic advisor. She is a May graduate of the Mississippi Community College Leadership Academy.



Abby Jenkins

MARCH 2022

EMCC Gateway Career Coach Jasmine Turner, who works at The Communiversity, counsels youths ages 17-24 and helps them determine if they want to enter an educational or skills training program. She also teaches Essential Job Skills. Turner has been employed with EMCC for six years.



Jasmine Turner

APRIL 2022

Landscape Management and Golf/Recreational Turf Management instructor and program director Danny Smith has taught both programs at EMCC's Lion Hills Center since 2013. Smith first began working for EMCC in the maintenance department overseeing landscaping at the Golden Triangle campus.



Danny Smith

MAY 2022

EMCC English instructor Janet Briggs serves as the Fine Arts & Humanities Division Chairperson as well as a Phi Theta Kappa advisor for EMCC's Scooba campus. She has worked for EMCC for more than 22 years.



Janet Briggs

JUNE 2022

EMCC Accounts Payable Purchasing Manager Leslie Williamson and her team handle purchasing transactions for the college's Golden Triangle campus and the Lion Hills Center. She has been employed with EMCC since 2004.



Leslie Williamson

JULY 2022

Ray Hollis is the Workforce Business Outreach and Training Manager at The Communiversity. He has worn several hats since he started working for EMCC more than eight years ago, including that of Engineering Technology Drafting & Design instructor, CAD project coordinator and Computer Automated Manufacturing department head.



Ray Hollis

Humanities Teacher of the Year



In February, DeLisa Brand, the English Department chair on EMCC's Scooba campus, was named the college's Humanities Teacher of the Year award recipient. Brand, who has worked at EMCC for more than six years, teaches English Comp I and II, as well as World Literature. Brand and Humanities Teacher of the Year award recipients in the state were recognized March 25 by the Mississippi Humanities Council.



EMCC Adult Education student featured in Harvard Magazine

Gary Jones, center, holds a framed copy of the May-June 2022 issue of Harvard Magazine in which he is featured in an article titled "The Upward Mobility Problem" that is accompanied by a signed note from the article's author. The article highlights Jones and the role community colleges play in helping American workers garner the skills they need to earn a good wage. Jones, who earned a high school equivalency diploma through EMCC's Adult Education department, is pictured here at the June Adult Education graduation ceremony with his sister Shaquayla Sherrod, at left, and EMCC President Dr. Scott Alsobrooks. Jones also completed the Mississippi Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training program and Commercial Truck Driving program at EMCC.

Employees participate in Fellows Program



From left, EMCC Chief Financial Officer Tammie Holmes, Vice President of Instruction Dr. James Rush and Scooba campus Mathematics and Science Division Chairperson Marion Smoot were named to the 2021-2022 Mississippi cohort of the Community College Policy Fellows Program, which included leadership training and professional development that culminated in a trip to Washington, D.C. to advocate on behalf of Mississippi's community colleges.

Lions battle back to the top with eighth conference football championship

It is often said in sports that it is more difficult to stay on top than to get there.

In the case of EMCC's nationally acclaimed football program, the success the Lions enjoyed during the decade of 2008-18 was unparalleled on the national scene. Five national championships, seven conference titles and nine division crowns were captured during that successful 11-year span.

During recent years, head coach Buddy Stephens' Lions may have slipped slightly from the top, but they didn't descend too far down the peak. An opt-out year in 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic was sandwiched between seasons that saw EMCC uncharacteristically bow out during the conference semifinals in both 2019 and 2021. A one-point overtime home playoff loss to Hinds a year ago fueled the fervor to again be the best and end the title drought.

On the heels of another productive summer of workouts and conditioning, the Lions incurred an unfortunate setback heading into fall camp with the resignation of the team's offensive coordinator two weeks prior to the start of the season. After a shift of some coaching responsibilities, the preseason sixth-ranked Lions were ready to tackle a challenging schedule that consisted of three straight road games during the early part of their 2022 football slate.

The tough initial portion of the schedule opened with a solid 38-0 shutout home win over Copiah-Lincoln. The Lions then recovered from a 42-28 road setback to playoff-bound Jones College with a convincing 45-9 victory over an improved Holmes team in a game played at Ridgeland High School.

The difficult middle part of the regular-season slate came against the same two teams EMCC would later face in November during the MACCC playoffs. After making an improbable second-half comeback from a 31-7 deficit to claim a stunning 48-45 road triumph over Mississippi Gulf Coast, the Lions fell to 3-2 on the year by dropping a 38-21 home decision to eventual MACCC North



The 2022 EMCC Lions went on the road to knock off MACCC South Division champion Mississippi Gulf Coast (38-27) and nationally second-ranked Northwest Mississippi (36-28) on successive Saturdays during the MACCC playoffs to claim their eighth conference football championship in 14 years under the guidance of head coach Buddy Stephens.

Division champion Northwest Mississippi to close out the month of September.

Though October began with a hard-earned 24-16 home win over a competitive Coahoma club, EMCC's season hit a speed bump in Booneville when seven turnovers contributed to the team's 31-21 loss at Northeast Mississippi. Now 4-3 overall on the season with two division losses, the Lions' postseason future was in some doubt.

"Looking back, I thought our guys really learned a lot this year," Stephens reflected. "We grew from the mistakes we made early in the season. Mistakes typically haven't cost us a lot of losses, but this year it cost us a few."

To their credit, the Lions regrouped as a collective unit and closed out the regular season with a 38-10 Homecoming victory over Itawamba and a 63-14 road win over Mississippi Delta. The late wins provided momentum heading into the postseason and secured EMCC's 13th conference playoff appearance in the 15 seasons under Stephens' guidance.

With renewed confidence moving into November, the Lions completed their

season sweep of Gulf Coast with a 38-27 semifinal win over the Bulldogs. After the game, Stephens acknowledged his pride and admiration for the team by recognizing their performance as well as providing encouragement to capture the grand prize ahead.

"I love this team, and I am so proud of all of you," Stephens told his players post-game. "You guys have no idea how good you can be when you play together and play all four quarters."

EMCC seemingly took those sentiments to heart in the rematch against No. 2 Northwest by jumping out to a 20-0 lead on the way to upsetting the two-time reigning MACCC champions, 36-28, in the title game played in Senatobia. Despite facing some adversity during the early portion of the season, the Lions battled back to collect their eighth conference championship in the last 14 years.

"The championship game was a rewarding ending to our season," Stephens noted. "We grew as a team and the coaches grew as a staff. We did a great job of coming back and just continuing to play like we knew we could."

Men's golf with more depth, experience in second season back on links

Believing in strength in numbers, East Mississippi Community College men's golf coach Ashton Maddaloni looks forward to the future knowing that the best has yet to come for the up-and-coming Lions.

In her second season as the head coach of EMCC's reinstated men's golf program, Maddaloni is excited about the prospects of the 2022-23 team and for the longevity of the Lions' golf program in general. After getting through last year's initial season back on the links using a limited roster with very little, if any, tournament experience, she set out during this past offseason to add depth with tournament-ready players.

"The program has shown a tremendous amount of growth since last season," Maddaloni emphasized. "Having a deeper roster than last year has certainly helped keep this year's team in check by allowing us to have a more competitive atmosphere in practice and during qualifying for events."

Headed by reigning NJCAA Division II Gulf District Championship participant Matthew Phillips, EMCC's trio of returnees also includes Payton Chandler and Bryce Colbert. The Lions' talented newcomer class features Mississippi Gulf Coast transfer Spence Davis along with freshman newcomers Ben Boggan, Carter Martin and Daniel Martin. The even distribution of talent among the three returnees and the four incoming players has helped maintain a competitive mindset between



EMCC sophomore golfer Matthew Phillips, a reigning NJCAA Division II Gulf District Championship participant for the Lions, capped the 2022 fall season with a third-place individual finish at a tournament held in Jasper, Alabama.



Second-year EMCC head men's golf coach Ashton Maddaloni (left) has received immediate contributions from Mississippi Gulf Coast transfer Spence Davis, who finished the fall season with the second-best stroke average on the Lions team.

tournaments, as evidenced by the Lions having various different lineups during the fall season.

"This year's newcomers have come in and made an immediate impact on this program, while our returners have shown a large amount of improvement since last season," Maddaloni noted. "Every player on this team has the talent to be in the top five of our lineup."

The Lions showed much-needed balance throughout the lineup during the fall season with three different players earning team scoring honors in tournament play. A product of Columbus Christian Academy, Phillips capped this past fall with back-to-back top 10 individual finishes. Three other Lion golfers finished tourney action within the top 15 individually during fall play.

Comprised this season of seven members who collectively have gained valuable competitive golf experience along with displaying a genuine passion for the game and owning a great work ethic, the Lions' team highlight to date came when they finished as runners-up at Briarwood Golf Club in Meridian during the MACCC's third fall tournament. EMCC's top four finishers all placed among the top 25 individually with all four shooting 80 or better during second-round play.

"I am very proud of our runner-up finish because it appears to have instilled confidence that we can compete within this

challenging conference," Maddaloni said. "Although the players were happy with the finish, they also recognize that we can do better because we left a lot of strokes on the course."

While singling out the team's acquired ability to perform better course management as their biggest collective improvement this season, Maddaloni notes that the players are much more willing to sacrifice a few yards off the tee box in order to achieve better placement for themselves on the course.

Along with the players' improved mental aspect of the game of golf, Maddaloni also acknowledges their commitment to remain unified both on and off the golf course.

"What I am most proud of through everything is how well all of them get along," she explains. "They have formed a very unique bond, and they spend time together outside of practice and tournaments. I believe this has yielded a very positive environment and we feel like a family."

This family-like atmosphere and willingness to keep improving are what keep Maddaloni very hopeful for the remainder of this golf season and beyond.

"I am very optimistic because I know that we have not shown what these players are capable of yet, and I truly believe the sky is the limit for these guys and this team."

Optimistic Lions bid for additional championship hoops hardware

The EMCC men's basketball program has proven to be one of the most successful programs in the talent-laden Mississippi Association of Community Colleges Conference during the past dozen years.

The one common denominator between the Lions' prior four straight NJCAA Region 23 Tournament championships and NJCAA Tournament appearances to tip off the decade of the 2010s and their more recent pair of conference tournament titles won during the past four seasons is eighth-year head coach Billy Begley. The former Mississippi State basketball team captain previously spent three seasons on the Scooba campus serving as Mark White's assistant coach before leaving for a two-year stint as an assistant at Troy University and then returning as EMCC's head men's basketball coach in 2015.

Upon taking over EMCC's hoops program, Begley immediately guided the Lions to their fifth consecutive NJCAA Tournament berth. A few years later, he directed a sophomore-laden 2018-19 squad to the school's first men's basketball conference championship since the early 1930s. A season ago, another experienced Lions squad again captured the conference spotlight by claiming the 2022 MACCC



EMCC head men's basketball coach Billy Begley (right) and assistant coach DJ Evans have guided the Lions to two conference tournament championships in the past four years.



The reigning MACCC Men's Basketball Tournament champion EMCC Lions are comprised of three returning players, including 2022-23 MACCC Player of the Year candidate Blake Butler (#10), and 10 incoming newcomers.

Tournament title in Poplarville. Last year's EMCC team was also ranked as high as No. 7 in the national rankings.

Entering 2022-23 boasting four-year composite records of 67-30 overall and 38-13 in conference/division play dating back to the 2018-19 season, Begley's Lions enter the new campaign as one of the MACCC's front-runners despite returning only three players from last year's 21-7 club.

This year's preseason optimism centers around the return of third-year standout guard Blake Butler, a Louisville, Kentucky product who earned All-Region 23 honors for the 2022 MACCC Tournament champions. He is a prime candidate for the MACCC's Player of the Year honor after averaging 14.5 points, 4.9 rebounds and 2.7 assists last season.

"Blake has matured so much and has been more consistent every day in his effort, attitude and work ethic," Begley said. "He puts in the work every day and he's playing with great confidence."

Also returning from last year's conference tourney championship team and looking to provide some leadership and experience are guard Kevin Henry (Center Hill HS) and forward Jacob Reese (Starkville).

When looking to help fill the void left by the collective departures of 2021-22 NJCAA Honorable Mention All-American Jakorie Smith along with veterans Danny Washington, Traemond Pittman, Nick Walker and Elijah Newsome, Begley revisited his home state roots to secure Louisville native DJ Avery along with fellow

Kentuckian Andrew Mason. Avery averaged nearly 10 points and six rebounds last season at South Plains College in Texas, while Mason was the 2021-22 5th Region Player of the Year in being selected to the Kentucky-Ohio All-Star Game.

"You don't replace any of those guys from last year," Begley noted. "You might be able to replace stats, but it takes time to replace the value that those guys brought to the gym every day."

Adding to the mix of newcomers this season will be eight freshmen from the Mississippi prep ranks, including a handful of in-state prospects who figure to contribute immediately within the Lions' primary rotation. Tremaine Dixon Jr. (Raymond) looks to run the point guard position, while Ashten Michael (Clinton) and Terrell Dixon (Brandon HS) will primarily operate on the perimeter. EMCC has also added forwards Christian Noel (Raymond HS) and Parker Henry (West Lauderdale HS) to provide needed interior stability.

"Those five have been really good and they've all stood out in their own areas," Begley added.

Other new faces for the Lions this season will be Jordan Edwards (New Hope HS), La'Derrius Love (Gentry HS) and Cadre Hampton (Kemper County HS).

"We've basically had to start with square one with this team," Begley continued. "Sometimes it's the littlest things that we often take for granted as coaches. But at the same time, it's also been fun getting back to the teaching aspect of coaching."

Lady Lions on the rise with new hoops leadership and united team

It is often said that a successful sports team takes on the personality of its head coach. With that noted, the 2022-23 EMCC women's basketball team figures to be a hard-working group of disciplined players under the direction of first-year head coach Isaiah Butler.

Butler, who has succeeded retired coaching veteran and current EMCC Director of Athletics & Dean of Students/ Scooba Campus Sharon Thompson, has taken command of the Lady Lions' program after playing an integral role in Coahoma Community College's recent women's basketball success. The former Mississippi State basketball walk-on expects his players to show the same type of work ethic and passion for the game that helped enable him to eventually earn a full athletic scholarship with the Bulldogs.

"When I look at this year's team, I see hard workers who are great people, and I see a lot of potential," Butler said. "I expect this team to work hard and to play disciplined, aggressive, fast and together."

Butler's initial EMCC women's team will consist of five returning players and nine newcomers, led by returning starting point guard DJ Williams. The Columbus product averaged 7.1 points, 4.6 assists, 3.0 rebounds and 1.6 steals per game in starting all 25 games as a freshman for the Lady Lions.

Freshman guard Kennedy Jimison (Northeast Lauderdale HS) will be looked upon to contribute immediately upon returning from a medical redshirt season due to an injury.

"DJ started every game last year and that is invaluable to our success this year. Kennedy was out last year after a season-ending injury, but she is back with a vengeance this season," Butler noted.

Guard Jada Odneal (Starkville) along with forwards Sukkima Suell (Starkville) and Zaniyah Brown (Velma Jackson HS) are also back and figure to provide needed



Under the guidance of first-year head women's basketball coach Isaiah Butler and assistant coach Zariah Matthews, the 2022-23 EMCC Lady Lions return five players from last year's team along with bringing aboard nine newcomers.

experience and leadership to a youthful squad.

"I am looking for a lot of leadership from our returners due to their experience. Some of them will be stepping into new roles with their names being called on more often than they have been," Butler added. "I think all of the returners are excited about this new opportunity together."

Perhaps slightly ahead of the other newcomers because of their prior MACCC playing experience are transfer guards Sadie Williams (Pontiac, MI) and Gabby Collier (Brandon), who played at Mississippi Gulf Coast and Pearl River, respectively, last season.

"Sadie and Gabby have come in extremely humble and have fit right into the system rather seamlessly. We'll be looking for a lot



Sophomore point guard DJ Williams returns for the Lady Lions after averaging 7.1 points, 4.6 assists, 3.0 rebounds and 1.6 steals per game as a 25-game freshman starter a year ago for EMCC.

from them both offensively and defensively."

The youth of this year's EMCC women's team is demonstrated by the fact that half of the players on the 14-player squad are true freshmen. Butler and his assistant coach Zariah Matthews, who played at Mississippi College, are impressed with the collective potential and diversity of their incoming freshmen.

According to Butler, athletic guard Ramya King (Memphis, TN) has demonstrated impressive quickness and continues to develop into a good ball handler. He also has taken note of the length and speed of Nakeria Scales (Starkville), Hannah McDougale (Newton County HS) and Kylah Bell (Pass Christian), while also having acknowledged Brianna Jordan (Holmes County Central HS), Shanayshia Culpepper (East Webster HS) and Kellie Strong (Murrah HS) as strong post players with aggression and toughness.

"This freshman group has a lot to offer and I think they will make an immediate impact on the program," Butler said.

As the 2022-23 women's basketball season unfolds on the Scooba campus, the Lady Lions will look to strive to establish their own identity by bonding together and improving every day under their first-year head coach.

"We are going to stick together as a unit the entire season because the chemistry on this team is something special," Butler emphasized. "They have grown very close in this short amount of time, and that is going to help keep them going through this season."

Baseball momentum looks to continue with new field, new energy

Timing is everything, and the time appears to be now for the East Mississippi Community College baseball program. From facility upgrades to team expectations, the primary ingredients appear to be in place for consistent success on the diamond for the Lions.

Fresh off the program's best baseball season in seven years, fifth-year head coach Brett Kimbrel's Lions have reloaded with plenty of incoming talent just in time to welcome the arrival of a fully turfed playing surface and refurbished batting cages at Gerald Poole Field. These upgrades come on the heels of a year-old locker room facility that has also recently been added to give EMCC one of the finest baseball facilities in the conference.

"I appreciate the EMCC administration so much for allowing us to do what we're doing here on the Scooba campus with our baseball facilities," Kimbrel emphasized. "The vibe that's around our campus now and within our baseball program is very exciting to experience."

Self-admittedly one year ahead of their scheduled plan to bring baseball relevance back to campus, Kimbrel along with assistant coaches Chase Reeves, Dylan Earnest and Braxton Lee now collectively focus their attention on continuing the success and maintaining the excitement generated by last year's successful team. Along with finishing third in the 2022 MACCC regular-season standings with a 20-8 conference mark, the 28-19 Lions earned the No. 2 seed in advancing to the NJCAA Region 23 Tournament for the first time since 2015. Off the field a year ago, EMCC finished among the top 10 NJCAA baseball teams academically in recording a program-best team grade point average for the second straight year.

In order to maintain the momentum created over the past year, the EMCC coaches and players understand that with success comes a new mindset and additional hard work to continue the climb to the top.

"Last year, we were in just about every game whether we had to outscore a team or outpitch them," Kimbrel noted. "This



Veteran EMCC head baseball coach Brett Kimbrel (middle) and assistant coach Chase Reeves look to maintain the Lions' momentum on the heels of last year's 28-19 overall record and 20-8 conference mark.

group has taken that same mentality and run with it. This is who we are now. The question is, how good can we be?"

That all-important question figures to be answered in part by a talent-laden team comprised mostly of incoming freshmen with a sprinkling of returning sophomores in the mix. The primary returners from last year's squad that produced 11 players who moved on to the four-year level are outfielder Ethan Medlin and middle infielder Coby Holmes, who both had 11 extra-base hits as everyday starters for the Lions a year ago. Medlin, from Louisiana, was All-MACCC Second Team last season.

A third returning sophomore who has seemingly cemented his name among EMCC's frontline pitchers is Gulfport product Austin Garrison. The right-hander stepped to the forefront on the mound with a solid fall campaign after primarily playing behind UAB junior Blayze Berry at shortstop for the Lions a season ago.

Along with the steady success on the field each year comes additional recruiting opportunities for EMCC's coaches. The program's transformed facilities and state-of-the-art turfed field have also enabled the coaches to put more of an emphasis on athleticism as they continue to dip more into established, winning high school programs these days.

"The consistency of our talent throughout the entire team is definitely better than in

previous years," Kimbrel said. "We have competitive players with some pretty high baseball IQs. We also tend to go after the blue-collar guys who are winners and enjoy winning."

All of these important player characteristics will figure to bode well this spring when the revamped EMCC Lions venture out on a challenging 2023 baseball slate looking to take advantage of their present opportunity with undeterred confidence.

"We've got better all-around players and more competitive players. You can see the competitiveness at each position," Kimbrel added. "We're going to be young and inexperienced, but I don't think the players worry about that. And I don't worry about that."



Sophomores Ethan Medlin (left) and Coby Holmes return from EMCC's 2022 baseball team that advanced to the NJCAA Region 23 Baseball Tournament for the first time since the 2015 season.

Talented softball roster, new attitude promises exciting season

Some say it's not a matter of winning as long as you have fun. Second-year EMCC head softball coach Whitney Hawkins expects to do both this season and well into the future.

"I am really excited about the upcoming season. I believe this team has that fight and the grit to be successful after what I saw during the fall," Hawkins noted. "The atmosphere they created in the dugout was unmatched."

After forging through an initial season at the Lions' helm short on numbers while competing in the challenging MACCC, Hawkins along with assistant coaches Mackenzie Byrd and Johnny Hawkins went back to work on the recruiting trail.

"We choose to recruit coachable, hard-working athletes who compete and don't quit when they face adversity," Hawkins emphasized. "Along with loving the game, they need to never be satisfied and continue to learn and grow with every step."

The results of that hard work and perseverance can be seen up and down this year's roster. Talented incoming freshmen and a handful of impact transfers have joined forces with a few returning starters from a year ago to form a cohesive unit who collectively take pride in their winning attitude and competitive drive.

"I am very excited about the speed we have added to this year's roster. It should be exciting to watch us not only on the bases, but in the field as well," Hawkins added. "We've also added some explosive bats to our lineup."

As with most college softball teams at any level of competition, the conversation begins with the prospects of the Lions' pitching staff. Laken Firth (Grand Bay, AL) returns to the circle after leading EMCC's pitchers with seven victories a year ago. Incoming freshmen Carys Goodwin (Corinth) and Lana Atkins (Millport, AL) also figure to throw plenty of innings this season.



Sophomore Laken Firth returns as EMCC's top pitcher after starting more than half of the Lions' 47 games in the circle last year, including posting a team-high seven wins and 12 complete games in 2022.

"I can't wait to see what we can do with this pitching staff," said Hawkins, an Alabama native who was a standout collegiate pitcher herself at the University of Alabama in Huntsville and Wallace Community College. "Laken did a great job in the circle for us this fall, and we're also counting on Carys and Lana."

Along with having their leading pitcher back from last season, the Lions also return their top hitter in first baseman Celeste Study. The St. Martin High School product led EMCC a year ago in batting average (.387), slugging percentage (.613), hits (48), doubles (16), home runs (4), and runs batted in (37).

Also returning for EMCC this year are middle infielder Carley Martin (Heritage Academy) and infielder Jenna Kirkland



Returning starters Laken Firth (#8) and Celeste Study are back as the Lions' leading pitcher and hitter, respectively, and will look to provide veteran leadership to this year's EMCC softball squad.

(Greensburg, LA), who is expected to be redshirted after having surgery.

The Lions look to also benefit from the transfer route with four newcomers switching uniforms this season. Outfielder Sidney Argo (Ewing, KY) and catcher Devyn Debardeleben (Montgomery, AL) came over from Shelton State, while outfielder Ki'arah Byrd (Petal) made the move from Coahoma. An additional catcher, Magen Caro, from Beville State by way of the Louisiana prep ranks, will join the Lions during the semester break.

"We have some transfers who really stood out this fall and have been great additions to our lineup," Hawkins pointed out. "All of them will very likely play at the next level."

Other incoming in-state freshmen expected to compete for playing time this coming season include outfielders Brooke Knoop (Caledonia), Victoria Irby (West Lauderdale HS), Avery Luke (Kemper Academy) and Tristin Price (Smithfield). Infielders Anna Claire Brewer (Enterprise), Layla Roper (New Site HS) and Madalyn Dvorak (Caledonia), along with valuable utility players Kelsey Odom (Laurel) and Cara Whatley (Baldwyn HS), are all also in the mix for game action depending mostly on offensive production.

"We basically have a completely different team this year. Not only are we more athletic, but we have so much personality on this team," Hawkins noted. "The Lions are going to be a fun bunch to watch and coach."

Rodeo teams eye second half of season looking for continued success

Though collegiate rodeo is perhaps not as greatly appreciated as some of the more traditional sports on the campus scene, the skill of roping and riding continues to be one of the most successful sports on East Mississippi Community College's Scooba campus.

Since the program's inception in the fall of 2010, EMCC's rodeo teams have achieved national recognition under the direction of 13th-year head coach Morgan Goodrich despite having to compete alongside established four-year university programs within the same national organization. Following a run of three consecutive top 10 men's team national finishes (2016-18) and back-to-back top 10 women's team placings in the College National Finals Rodeo the past two years, Goodrich sees her 2022-23 rodeo teams in current differing states of transition and rebuild.

Coming off recent successive seasons in which they finished No. 4 nationally in 2021 and sixth during this past year's CNFR, the EMCC women are looking to fill the void created when back-to-back national collegiate reserve champion barrel racing sisters and professional cowgirls Jaylie and Taycie Matthews took their talents to the University of West Alabama. Their collective departure has created some opportunities for a youthful



Under the direction of 13th-year head rodeo coach and Scooba native Morgan Goodrich, the 2022-23 EMCC Lions will once again vie for positioning within the Ozark Region standings with an eye toward the College National Finals Rodeo.

women's team to gain some additional experience in the arena.

"We're definitely rebuilding on the women's side, though we have some potential there," Goodrich admitted.

With six cowgirls on this year's inexperienced EMCC roster, freshman breakaway roper Juliana Jennings, out of Mendenhall's Simpson Academy, grabbed first-place honors during her second college rodeo event hosted by UWA this past fall.

Also comprising the EMCC women's squad this season are sophomores Josie Dial and Josie Luttrell along with freshmen Rylei Loftin, Hannah Ward and Shadow Goodrich.

In contrast to the rebuilding status of the women's team, the EMCC men's rodeo team figures to have enough talent, versatility and depth to make a legitimate run as one of two Ozark Region men's teams to potentially qualify for the prestigious College National Finals Rodeo.

The Lions are looking to return to the form when they produced two national champions during a three-year period with current professional cowboys Marcus Theriot (2016 all-around & tie-down roping) and Tristan Martin (2018 steer wrestling) claiming CNFR titles.

In order for the Lions to be able to advance to and potentially excel at the grand stage of collegiate rodeo again, they look to receive

solid contributions from several team roping tandems along with getting some other experienced sophomores to step up on a consistent basis during the spring portion of the 2022-23 season.

The biggest point producers for EMCC during the fall season were team roping brothers Cade and Cooper Cowan, out of Marshall Academy. While claiming consecutive team roping event titles at fall rodeos hosted by UWA and Three Rivers College, the reigning CNFR participants spent most of the first half of this season atop the Ozark Region team roping standings and among the top five national leaders.

Along with the Cowan brothers, EMCC's team roping tandem of Tanner Brown and Koby Sanchez has also stood among the regional leaders during the first half of the current rodeo season. They, along with the freshman twin brother duo of Colton and Wyatt Allen, figure to be key factors during EMCC's potential run at securing a possible second-place men's team finish in the Ozark Region's final regular-season standings.

Other seasoned veterans who are being counted on to contribute during the spring season include Gavin Lee, Laine Moore, Roper Stoots and Matt Watt. With other reliable performers, including some talented freshmen, also capable of generating points during any given rodeo, Goodrich often faces the difficult task of narrowing down her points team to just six cowboys for team scoring purposes.

"The points are out there each week on the men's side," Goodrich noted. "It's always a gamble and it's so hard to predict who is going to perform. Many of them have the potential to win."



The brother tandem of Cade and Cooper Cowan has ranked among the nation's top 10 team roping leaders throughout their EMCC careers and will bid for a repeat June appearance at the prestigious CNFR in Casper, Wyoming.

EMCC alumnus inducted into MCJC Sports Hall of Fame

Former East Mississippi basketball standout Max Johnson was one of 15 individuals inducted into the Mississippi Community and Junior College Sports Hall of Fame April 26 during the annual induction banquet held at the Clyde Muse Center on Hinds Community College's Rankin Campus.

A graduate of Cumberland High School, Johnson arrived on the Scooba campus in 1951 and became a valuable member of one of East Mississippi's most successful men's basketball teams as a college freshman. The 1951-52 Lions posted a 26-6 record in finishing as conference runners-up. Eight players from that team, coached by W.F. Childres and Clayton Blount, are members of EMCC's Sports Hall of Fame, including Johnson's good friends and fellow Mississippi Community and Junior College Sports Hall of Fame honorees Tom Scarborough and Mack Robinson.

The next season as the Lions' only returning letterman, Johnson stepped up to become the team captain of first-year head coach Keyes T. Currie's 1952-53 squad. Johnson owns the honor of being Currie's first all-state basketball selection during the Hall of Famer's storied career as basketball coach/athletics director at East Mississippi.

Johnson was instrumental in the establishment of the Keyes T. Currie Memorial Division of East Mississippi Community College's Development Foundation in honor of his beloved junior college basketball coach.

Johnson transferred from the Scooba campus to Delta State University for the 1953-54 and 1954-55 academic years, where he continued his education on a basketball scholarship as a starting guard for the Statesmen.

Following his college days, Johnson joined the U.S. Army as a paratrooper and was stationed at Fort Campbell, Kentucky before receiving a hardship discharge after two years (1955-56) to help take care of his parents and their family farm in Mantee. Johnson also spent eight years in the U.S. Army Reserves.

Johnson worked 10 years (1958-67) for the federal government in the Department of Agriculture and Commerce and the Bureau of Public Roads. While continuing to farm and raise cattle following his government work, Johnson managed Nu-Way Building Supply in Mantee before purchasing the business in 1984 and later opening a second location in Eupora. The successful businessman retired in 2013.

Johnson and his wife, Marie, whom he married in 1985, currently reside on the same land in Mantee where he was born and raised. He has one son, Jody, and one daughter, Mary Margaret (Williams), along with four grandchildren and five great grandchildren. Johnson and his first wife, Mary (Stevens), were married for 18 years before her death in 1981. They also had a third child, Curt, who died at age 3 in 1976.

Johnson was inducted into the EMCC Sports Hall of Fame in 2002 and was



Max Johnson, who played basketball for EMCC from 1951 to 1953, was inducted into the Mississippi Community and Junior College Sports Hall of Fame this past April.

named the college's Distinguished Service Award recipient in 2010.

This year marks the 16th class of the Mississippi Community and Junior College Sports Hall of Fame. Johnson joins previously elected East Mississippi Community College inductees: Antowain Smith (2021); Malcolm "Mack" Robinson (2020); Richard Mathis (2019); Jack Mason Carlisle (2018); Langston Rogers (2017); Dr. Tommy Davis (2016); Tom Goode (2015); Dr. Randall Bradberry (2014); Retha Hand Henderson (2013); Johnny Fisher (2012); Joe Rowell (2011); Tom Scarborough (2010); Elbert "Lum" Wright (2009); Ken Waddell Sr. (2008); Don Edwards (2008); Clyde "Baby Doll" Pierce (2007); Bill Buckner (2007); and Bob "Bull" Sullivan (2007).

Lions open season with new turf at Sullivan-Windham Field

New turf was installed at Sullivan-Windham Field prior to the Lions' Sept. 1 season kickoff when they defeated visiting Copiah-Lincoln Community College 38-0. During play on the old turf, the Lions logged 51 wins and only 3 losses, with a 36-game home win streak and three MACJC championships. Installation of new turf on Gerald Poole Field will also be completed before the baseball team begins play in the spring.



EMCC claims Halbrook Award for student-athlete academic excellence

For the second time in four years, East Mississippi Community College earned the David M. Halbrook Award for having a perfect 100 percent graduation rate among the school's sophomore student-athletes during the 2021-22 academic year. The prestigious award was presented in October at the Mississippi Association of Colleges and Universities (MAC) business meeting in Tupelo.

Having previously garnered the coveted Halbrook Award during the 2018-19 academic year, this year's EMCC contingent graduated all 62 of its second-year student-athletes in addition to having three completers during the 2021-22 academic year. The college's 65 certified student-athletes consisted of 30 players from the Lions' 2021 MACCC North Division championship football squad, 19 from baseball's NJCAA Region 23 Tournament club, six from softball, and five each from women's basketball and men's basketball's MACCC Tournament championship team. Rodeo was not included among the graduation statistics because the sport is not affiliated with the Mississippi Association of Community Colleges Conference (MACCC).

"Receiving the Halbrook Award is a wonderful recognition of the hard work and efforts of EMCC's student-athletes," EMCC President Dr. Scott Alsobrooks said. "This recognition represents the dedicated efforts of EMCC's faculty, counselors and staff that work so diligently to ensure student success. We continue to take great pride in performing at a high level both in the classroom and during athletic competition. A special thanks also goes out to the Halbrook family for sanctioning these awards for community college students."

Established in 1984 and made possible through endowments from former Rep. David M. Halbrook, of Belzoni, and his brothers, John C. and James G. Halbrook, of Belzoni, and J.A. Halbrook, of Beaumont, Texas, in honor of their parents, John C. and Ernestine McCall Halbrook, the Halbrook Awards program recognizes colleges and universities that achieve and maintain high academic standards for student-athletes while also encouraging high graduation rates.

"It is so amazing to see our student-athletes be rewarded for their dedication and commitment to their academic success," said Sharon Thompson, EMCC's Director of Athletics & Dean of Students/Scooba Campus. "Congratulations to our student-athletes and coaches for winning the prestigious David M. Halbrook Award. I would also like to express my gratitude to the entire EMCC family for investing in the academic success of our student-athletes. We are also very appreciative of the Halbrook family for their commitment to academics."

This year marks the eighth time overall that EMCC has received the Halbrook Award since the awards program was authorized in 1984. Prior to most recently claiming the honor for the 2018-19 (tied w/ Copiah-Lincoln) and 2010-11 (tied w/Hinds) academic years, EMCC previously earned the recognition five times (1983-84, 1985-86, 1988-89, 1989-90 & 1992-93) during a 10-year span.

Individually for EMCC, Kaitlynn Stroud and Wesley Sides were the school's respective female and male recipients of the 2021-22 David M. Halbrook Certificate for Academic Achievement among



EMCC Director of Athletics & Dean of Students/Scooba Campus Sharon Thompson was presented the David M. Halbrook Award trophy for EMCC's state-best 100 percent graduation rate among sophomore student-athletes during the 2021-22 academic year.



EMCC President Dr. Scott Alsobrooks, at left, and Athletic Academic Advisor Abby Jenkins with the David M. Halbrook Award trophy. Jenkins serves as the liaison between EMCC faculty, student-athletes and coaches.

student-athletes in the community college division. From Enterprise, Stroud posted a 4.00 cumulative grade point average in nursing as a two-year softball player for the Lions. Sides, from Southaven, posted team-leading numbers with 13 home runs, 40 RBIs to go along with his club-best .346 batting average to pace the 28-19 Lions to their first NJCAA Region 23 Baseball Tournament appearance since 2015 and a third-place finish in the MACCC regular-season standings with a 20-8 conference record this past year. The DeSoto Central High School product is currently continuing his collegiate baseball career at Mississippi College.

During the 2021-22 academic year, EMCC had a school-record 45 student-athletes garner national recognition for their academic excellence, including setting a new school standard with 17 student-athletes achieving perfect 4.00 grade point averages this past year. In addition, EMCC's softball (3.70 GPA), baseball (3.53), women's basketball (3.33) and football (3.00) teams all received NJCAA All-Academic Team recognition.

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Foley football field named after EMCC alumnus Lester Smith

East Mississippi Junior College alumnus Lester Smith was a standout football quarterback at Foley High School who later returned there to become the Alabama school's winningest football coach.



Lester Smith

On Oct. 21, the field at Foley High School's Ivan Jones Stadium was named the Lester Smith - Bud Pigott Field in honor of Smith and his defensive coordinator during a ceremony prior to a home game at the school.

"It was a wonderful honor and very humbling," Smith said. "I appreciated it very much. I was also very happy that they included my defensive coordinator's name on the field - Bud Pigott. He and I coached together overall for 19 years."

Smith was well known in Foley, Alabama football circles dating back to his high school years when, as quarterback, he led the school's 1961 team to an undefeated season capped by a state championship, scoring 433 points and giving up only 6.

He transferred to EMJC in 1962 and quarterbacked for Coach Bob "Bull" Sullivan for a year, earning All American honors while completing 204 passes out of 330 for 17 touchdowns.

"I had never seen anybody throw the ball like Lester Smith," his former teammate and 2022 EMCC Alumnus of the Year Ronnie Carter said. "I said to him more than once, 'Lester, you are the greatest quarterback I have ever seen in my life.'"

Smith said his time at EMJC proved to be a great experience.

"Coach Sullivan was an offensive genius and a great man," Smith said. "I can never thank him enough for what he did for me."

When his parents moved back to Foley from Columbus, Mississippi during his sophomore year, Smith was ruled ineligible to play. He transferred to Southeastern Louisiana University, where he set seven school records as quarterback.

After graduating, he embarked on a career as teacher, coach and administrator that spanned 43 years, with 41 of those years employed by the Baldwin County Board of Education in Alabama. He won numerous accolades along the way, including Winningest Football Coach in Baldwin County History and Top 15 Coaches in Alabama (1980s). He is a four-time winner of Area and Regional Football Coach of the Year. Smith was inducted into EMCC's Sports Hall of Fame in 2002 and in the Alabama High School Sports Hall of Fame in 2011.

Smith said he is grateful for his time at EMJC.

"East Mississippi is a special place to me and very important to me in my career," Smith said.



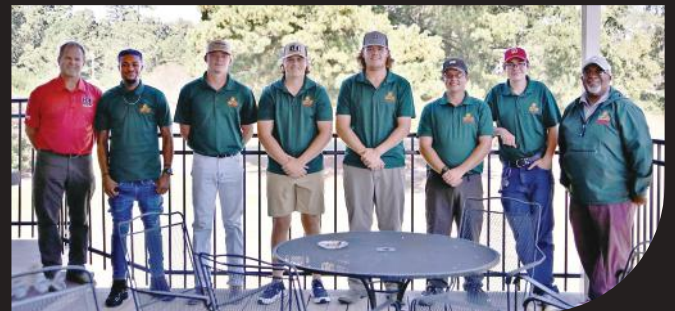
Pine Grove Festival

EMCC's annual Pine Grove Arts Festival took place in April on the college's Scooba and Golden Triangle campuses. On the Scooba campus, the festival featured an art exhibit, student activities and musical performances. Here, members of the Concert Choir perform in the F.R. Young Student Union.



GTECHS host Mardi Gras

In February, seniors at the Golden Triangle Early College High School on EMCC's Mayhew campus hosted a Mardi Gras parade. GTECHS students and staff marched and threw beads to onlookers that included students, faculty and staff at the college.



Serving summer internships

Sophomores in our Golf & Recreational Turf Management and Landscape Management programs served in summer internships at golf courses and recreational facilities in Mississippi and in other states, such as Florida and Montana. The students are in high demand, both as interns and employees after they graduate. They are pictured here with instructors Will Arnett, far left, and Danny Smith, far right.



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EMCC's Division of Nursing and Health Sciences expands offerings

East Mississippi Community College's Division of Nursing and Health Sciences has seen major changes over the past year that include new leadership, the reinstatement of a popular program on the college's Scooba campus, and a commitment to further expand program offerings.

On June 27, Jamonica Johnson was named director of Nursing Programs and associate dean of Health Sciences, replacing Dr. Tonsha Emerson, who retired earlier in the summer.



Jamonica Johnson

"One of the things we would like to do is grow our Nursing and Health Sciences programs and I am excited to be a part of that," Johnson said at the time. "I am a

former student at EMCC and to be able to impact our department's growth and provide more services to our students is something I am really looking forward to doing."

Work to expand program offerings has already begun. In January of 2022, the Practical Nursing program returned to EMCC's Scooba campus after a 19-year hiatus. Members of that inaugural class graduated this December.

When administrators with EMCC's Division of Nursing and Health Sciences conducted a needs assessment for the program, they received affirmation from the John C. Stennis Memorial Hospital in DeKalb and the Noxubee Medical Complex in Macon, as well as from Kemper County High School and the John C. Stennis Vocational Complex. They also received a letter of support from the Mississippi LPN Association expressing the need for LPNs in that area, as well as in the state.

In August, the public was invited to an open house to get a closer look at the program, which is housed in Hawkins Hall



An open house to showcase EMCC's new Practical Nursing program on the Scooba campus took place the afternoon of Thursday, Aug. 18, in Hawkins Hall.

and boasts its own dedicated classroom space, instructors' offices and a lab that meets state accreditation requirements. Two instructors, Linda Farmer and Chiquita Jones, were hired to teach the course.

As early as 2012, medical journals began reporting a growing demand for additional nurses to treat an aging baby boomer population with increased medical needs to include, in some cases, around-the-clock medical care. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, more than 65,000 additional LPNs will be needed in the U.S. by 2029.

Predictions for an increased demand across health-related professions prompted officials at EMCC to explore future options to increase the number of health-related offerings at the college.

"The Division of Nursing and Health Sciences is something we are looking at district-wide to see where we can add more capacity and new programs," EMCC President Dr. Scott Alsobrooks said.

This past summer, programs with the Division of Workforce and Community Services that were located in the former Center for Manufacturing and Technology Excellence building on EMCC's Golden

Triangle campus were moved to The Community at EMCC.

The old CMTE building, along with space in the Douglas Building, is now dedicated to Division of Nursing and Health Sciences programs and offices, which includes Practical Nursing, Associate Degree Nursing, Surgical Technology and Emergency Medical Technician programs of study, as well as an LPN to RN transition option for licensed practical nurses looking to continue their education.

Johnson has worked at EMCC since 2006, serving first as an adjunct Practical Nursing clinical instructor and later as a fulltime Practical Nursing instructor. She earned a certificate in Practical Nursing from EMCC in 2002. She was later awarded an Associate of Science degree in Nursing and a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing from Mississippi University for Women. In 2022, she completed a Master of Science degree in Nursing from the University of South Alabama, with a concentration in Clinical Nurse Leader.

Johnson oversees the Associate Degree Nursing and Practical Nursing programs and serves as dean of the Surgical Technology and Emergency Medical Technician programs.

Stakeholder collaboration: a key component of Workforce and Community Services

Last summer, the Workforce and Community Services division offices and classroom space located at East Mississippi Community College's Golden Triangle campus were relocated down the road to The Communiversity, the college's 145,638-square-foot facility dedicated to training students for careers in advanced manufacturing.

New workforce programs were added at EMCC's Scooba campus and in March Dr. David Campbell was hired as executive director of The Communiversity and Workforce Development.

"Workforce development is about meeting local industry needs while providing community members the skills they need to fill in-demand jobs while earning a living that will support them and their families," Campbell said. "Education bridges a skills gap by providing training that is beneficial to both industry and employees."

Campbell, who earned a Doctor of Philosophy in Community College Leadership from Mississippi State University and a Master of Education in Guidance and Counseling from the University of Mississippi, was vice president for Workforce Development and Career-Technical Education at St. Johns River State College in Orange Park, Florida in his previous position.

A Mississippi native, Campbell has nearly three decades of experience working at Mississippi community colleges. He is a former vice president for Workforce Solutions and Career-Technical Education at Northwest Mississippi Community College, and a former dean for Career and Technical Education at the Rankin campus of Hinds Community College.

"I am excited about the potential to build upon the partnerships EMCC has established with business and industry leaders, local and state public officials, the Golden Triangle Development LINK and K-12 stakeholders," Campbell said. "By collaborating with our local stakeholders, we can continuously develop new training programs and methods as new technologies emerge. That is a huge win for our students."

Since its opening in the fall of 2019, The Communiversity has served as an education-



Officials with PACCAR Engine Company set up a booth at The Communiversity this fall and met with qualified students interested in paid internships as a Maintenance Craft Technician or Machining Operator. Workforce and Community Services' partnerships with local industries benefit students in myriad ways.



Dr. David Campbell

al hub for workforce development. Advanced manufacturing programs available at The Communiversity include Precision Machining & Manufacturing; Engineering Drafting & Design; Electrical Technology; Mechatronics Technology; Industrial Maintenance; and Systems Based Automation.

The Workforce division also offers numerous short-term noncredit programs designed to help people upgrade their skills or obtain new ones. Those programs include Certified Medical Coding, Certified Nursing Assistant, Computer Aided Design, HVAC, Forklift/Logistics, Heavy Civil Construction and Welding, to name a few.

The Workforce division has also expanded its offerings at EMCC's Scooba campus, with new programs offered there including Electrical Technology, Heavy Civil Construction and Computer Networking.

Space is available at The Communiversity for area manufacturers to provide training to current and prospective employees. Prior to

the construction of The Communiversity, the Workforce and Community Services division was located in the Center for Manufacturing Technology Excellence (CMTE) on EMCC's Golden Triangle campus, with classroom space in the adjacent Douglas Building.

Programs related to advanced manufacturing moved into The Communiversity after it opened. This past summer, other Workforce programs in the CMTE and related classes in the Douglas building were relocated to The Communiversity, as was the WIOA Career Services department, which was created last year to consolidate some workforce programs under one roof.

The WIN Job Center also moved from the CMTE to The Communiversity and now operates under the WIOA Career Services umbrella, where work-based learning is a priority, with an emphasis on paid internships, externships and apprenticeships. Local businesses and industries participate in regular Employer in the Foyer job fairs at The Communiversity, providing opportunities for both job seekers and employers.

"Some people are just looking for work and we will help them in their search," WIOA Career Services Director Greta Miller said. "Other people need new skills and we will match them with educational programs that can help them reach their goals, while helping them eliminate any barriers that may stand in their way."

Ronnie Carter, Mike Luke honored at EMCC Homecoming

Two East Mississippi Community College alumni were honored during the college's 2022 Homecoming activities.

Columbus native Ronnie Carter was named the 2022 Alumnus of the Year. Mike Luke, Class of 1972, passed away Oct. 12 and was posthumously honored with the 2022 Distinguished Service Award.

Carter and Luke were recognized Oct. 22 at an alumni reception and again later that day on Sullivan-Windham Field during halftime of EMCC's Homecoming football game, in which the Lions defeated Itawamba Community College 38 to 10.

ALUMNUS OF THE YEAR

Carter was a defensive back on legendary football coach Bob "Bull" Sullivan's 1963-64 team whose career in education spanned more than four decades as a teacher, multi-sport coach and administrator in Nashville.

"Obviously, being around Coach Sullivan was great but I was also around a number of outstanding teachers," Carter said. "They had an unbelievable impact on me."

A football and basketball standout at Lee High School in Columbus, Carter enrolled at then East Mississippi Junior College in 1963, serving as freshman class president. On Nov. 22 of that year, he walked into social science instructor Helen Price's history class to find the room empty and the following note written on the blackboard, "No class today. Go back to your dorms immediately and watch history in the making."

President John F. Kennedy had been assassinated as he rode in a motorcade through Dealey Plaza in downtown Dallas. "What Mrs. Price wrote on the board that day has stuck with me all these years," Carter said. "I had never thought about watching history in the making. You never know what you are witnessing and what you are part of when it is happening."

When his father accepted a job at a church in Birmingham, Alabama, Carter transferred



Columbus native Ronnie Carter, who resides in Tennessee, was named East Mississippi Community College's 2022 Alumnus of the Year. Here, he is presented a plaque by Executive Director of Alumni Affairs and Foundation Operations Gina Cotton, at left, and EMCC President Dr. Scott Alsbrooks, at right, during halftime of the college's Oct. 22 Homecoming football game.

from EMJC to Bethel College in McKenzie, Tennessee. After graduating in 1967, he embarked on a career in education in Nashville, teaching mathematics while coaching football, basketball, wrestling and track and field at various points in his career. In 1978 he landed his first administrative position as assistant director of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association (TSSAA) and was promoted to executive director of that organization in 1986 before retiring in 2009.

In the early 1990s, looking to drum up publicity for spring sports that were not getting the attention garnered by football and basketball, Carter and a friend came up with the idea of hosting a tournament for spring sports all at one site held within the same week.

"It was unbelievably successful and has grown every year since," Carter said.

Spring Fling XXIX took place this year and included thousands of athletes competing in baseball, softball, soccer, boys and girls tennis, boys and girls track and field, and unified track and field, which includes students with and without disabilities on the same team.

Carter also served on rules committees in football, basketball and wrestling for the National Federation of State High School Associations and was a consultant for the Universal Cheerleaders Association. He has been inducted into six sports hall of fame

classes, including those for EMCC (2014), TSSAA and NFHS National High School. Carter also garnered numerous awards, including the Fred Russell Lifetime Achievement Award presented by the Nashville Sports Council, the Roy Kramer Award for contributions to football by the National Football Foundation and the Middle Tennessee Chapter, Distinguished American



Mike Luke, who passed away Oct. 12, was named East Mississippi Community College's 2022 Distinguished Service Award winner. Luke, an alumnus of EMCC, was inducted into the college's Sports Hall of Fame in 2018. He is pictured here during the 2018 induction ceremony in this EMCC file photo.

Award presented by the National Football Foundation.

Educational roots run deep in Carter's family. His wife Caroline is a retired first grade teacher. His son, Jim (Heather), is an athletic director and baseball coach at Goodpasture Christian School in Nashville. His daughter, Amy Whitfield, works in communications for several Baptist churches in Wake Forest, North Carolina, and is married to Keith Whitfield, who is a provost there at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

"Education is a major part of our family," said Carter, who has four grandchildren: Cole, Rylee, Mary and Drew.

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

Luke was a lifelong resident of Kemper County who grew up in the community of Preston. A two-time team MVP in basketball at DeKalb High School, Luke graduated from Noxubee County High School. He earned a basketball scholarship to attend EMCC, where he played for Coach Keyes T. Currie. A team co-captain during his sophomore year, Luke garnered best defensive player honors for the 1971-72 season.

Off the court, he was named vice president of the sophomore class. Luke later earned a bachelor's degree in physical education and history from Mississippi State University and accepted a position at Carthage High School where he served as a teacher and girls basketball and track coach.

When his father, who was the District 4 representative on the Kemper County Board of Supervisors, died in a 1977 accident, Luke was appointed interim supervisor to fill his father's term and won every subsequent election for the post. Luke was in his 45th year in the position and, according to the Mississippi Association of Supervisors, he was the longest serving supervisor in the state of Mississippi.

Among his many accomplishments, he coordinated with other supervisors to bring the John C. Stennis Hospital to DeKalb, lobbied to get Lynville School listed on the National Register of Historic Places, assisted with the creation of Kemper County Lake, and worked diligently to get roads cleared in the aftermath of a 2010 tornado that damaged structures and downed trees.

Luke continued to coach when he wasn't busy inspecting roads, attending supervisor meetings and connecting with the residents



Kemper County Board of Supervisors member Mike Luke, who passed away Oct. 12, was named East Mississippi College's 2022 Distinguished Service Award winner. He was recognized posthumously during EMCC's Homecoming on Oct. 22. Here, Luke's daughters, Amy Ivy, at left, and Emily Lee accept the award on their father's behalf during halftime of EMCC's Homecoming football game.

he represented. He coached softball at Neshoba Central, Philadelphia, Choctaw Central and Noxubee County high schools, and boys basketball at Kemper County.

He coached Kemper Academy to three straight third-place finishes in slow-pitch softball and guided the girls' basketball team to the state semifinals. He started Neshoba Central High School's fast-pitch program and led the Lady Rockets to four consecutive Top 10 state rankings. Luke's four-year stint as boys basketball coach at Kemper County High School included a No. 1 state ranking in 2005 and a 93-17 composite finish. In 2018, Luke was inducted into the EMCC Sports Hall of Fame.

His stint at Kemper Academy provided him the opportunity to coach his daughters, Emily Lee and Amy Ivy, who played basketball and softball there.

"Coaching my girls in basketball was one of the highlights of my life," Luke told a Kemper County Messenger reporter for an August 2022 article.

Ivy later attended Clarkdale High School. During her senior year she transferred from Clarkdale to Neshoba Central so she could play for her dad one last time.

"It was awesome," Ivy said. "It felt as if things went right back into place with him. I wouldn't trade that last year of being able to play for my dad for anything in the world."

In August of 2020, Ivy was hired as EMCC's school nurse.

In 2008, Luke retired from coaching, but continued to serve as supervisor while staying busy as a hobby farmer, raising cattle. He also enjoyed spending time with his five grandchildren: Braxton Lee (an EMCC alumnus), Kayde Lee (a fulltime EMCC student), Jake Lee, Payton Ivy and Laykin Ivy.

Throughout the years, Luke was a regular attendee of EMCC events.

Luke and other Kemper County supervisors also worked closely with EMCC, providing input into educational programs that would benefit area residents. When EMCC was looking to build a locker room for the baseball team, the Kemper County Board of Supervisors provided about \$15,000 worth of dirt work needed before the foundation could be poured.

Ivy and Lee attended EMCC's Homecoming game and at halftime EMCC President Dr. Scott Alsbrooks presented them with the Distinguished Service Award plaque in honor of their father.

"Mike has been a true friend to East Mississippi Community College both professionally and personally," Alsbrooks said. "He will be sorely missed. It is our great honor to recognize him as our 2022 Distinguished Service Award recipient."

EMCC joins Achieving the Dream network

East Mississippi Community College sophomore Jadasha Harrison is a first-generation college student enrolled at EMCC's Scooba campus. A sibling of Harrison attended EMCC but did not graduate.

EMCC is taking steps to reduce the number of students who do not graduate. In the fall of 2021, EMCC joined the 2021 cohort of Achieving the Dream (ATD), a network of more than 300 colleges in 45 states and the District of Columbia dedicated to improving student success.

ATD teams at EMCC are working to improve equitable outcomes for students, bolster student retention and completion, and provide support networks to meet students' evolving needs.

"The Achieving the Dream program has a proven track record of ensuring that students are equipped with the tools they need to excel in college and achieve academic success, which has always been part of our mission," EMCC President Dr. Scott Alsobrooks said. "Our ATD teams have been working hard to create action plans to address areas where we can improve student outcomes. Our next step in the process is to implement those action plans and monitor the results to see what is working and what needs to be revised."

That's good news to Harrison, who is an officer with Phi Theta Kappa National Honor Society. She also serves as a manager for the women's basketball team and is a Resident Assistant, helping out in the department that oversees student resident services. She is also a member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. While Harrison is doing well at EMCC, she said finding time to study can be a challenge given her other activities.

"Some students are caught up in activities and have jobs, so it is sometimes late when they can do their schoolwork," she said. "More tutoring times would help, as would opening the library on Saturdays."

Expanding tutoring times is one of the things EMCC's ATD teams are looking at. The school's ATD action plan identified two priorities that were incorporated into the college's strategic plan. One of those priorities is to increase completion of students in gateway English and math within the first year by 5 percent and by



Sophomore Jadasha Harrison, at right, is inducted into the Eta Upsilon chapter of Phi Theta Kappa on the Scooba campus during a March ceremony. Harrison is EMCC's nominee for the 2023 DREAM Scholars program through the Achieving the Dream network. In 2021, EMCC joined the Achieving the Dream network, which is dedicated to improving student outcomes.

10 percent annually through 2025. The second priority is to raise the percentage of students earning at least 12 credits in the first semester (grade C or higher) by 25 percent by 2025.

In order to achieve those goals and others yet to be identified, ATD Data Coach Dr. Paula Pitcher and ATD Leadership Coach Dr. Mary Fifield have been meeting with members of EMCC's ATD teams virtually to help guide them through the transformation process. In October of 2022, the ATD coaches visited with faculty and staff on the college's Golden Triangle and Scooba campuses.

Early in the ATD process, students were invited to share their definitions of success and offer suggestions for improvements. Feedback was also sought from faculty, staff and administrators. During the three-year-long ATD program, progress will be monitored and data measured using qualitative and quantitative evidence to drive changes in policies and practices across the institution.

EMCC Director of Institutional Research, Effectiveness, Grants, and Sponsored Programs Susan Baird is co-leader of EMCC's ATD partnership.

"Through intentional work over the last year, East Mississippi Community College has made strides toward closing equity gaps in key student success metrics," Baird said. "EMCC will enhance the lives of residents in the communities we serve through equitable education opportunities."

Harrison was chosen out of a pool of applicants as EMCC's ATD 2023 DREAM Scholars nominee and is competing against nominees from other ATD network institutions across the country. Eight of the nominees will be selected by ATD officials as 2023 DREAM Scholars, which will entitle them to customized training and networking sessions that will culminate in attendance to the DREAM 2023 conference in Chicago, Illinois next February.

Harrison credits her instructors at EMCC for much of the success she has experienced since enrolling at the college.

"My instructors are great. Whenever I need help, they put time aside for me," Harrison said. "They go out of their way to make sure I understand my classwork, which helps a lot with my assignments and classwork."

EMCC Phi Theta Kappa chapters earn recognition

Achievements by East Mississippi Community College's Phi Theta Kappa chapters were announced during the Mississippi/Louisiana Region Awards Gala 2022 in March.

Both the Eta Upsilon chapter on the college's Scooba campus and the Beta Iota Zeta chapter on the Golden Triangle campus were named Five Star Chapters by Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society. The Five Star Designation marks the highest level of achievement by a PTK chapter. In addition, both chapters were named REACH chapters for excelling in membership development.

Horizon Awards are presented to chapter advisors who have served their region well. Scooba campus PTK advisors Janet Briggs and Derrick Conner garnered MS/LA Horizon Advisor Awards, as did Golden Triangle campus PTK advisors Scott Baine and Kelly Cantrell.

Baine also garnered the Paragon Award for New Advisors, which is reserved for those who make significant contributions to their PTK chapters. Baine was presented his award at Catalyst 2022, PTK's international convention that took place in Denver, Colorado, in April. Baine attended the event along with students from EMCC's Phi Theta Kappa chapters.



Members of EMCC's Phi Theta Kappa chapters who attended PTK's international convention in Denver, Colorado are, from left, Lindsey Younger, Peyton Dawkins, Chase Fry, Cameron Boone, Bryce Miller and Seth Givens. They were accompanied by Scott Baine, far right, a PTK advisor on EMCC's Golden Triangle campus.

The Eta Upsilon chapter also took home a sixth-place finish in the MS/LA Hallmark Project Award at the Mississippi/Louisiana Region Awards Gala. PTK students in the Eta Upsilon chapter wrote thank you notes and performed acts of kindness for all faculty and staff members on campus in "The Gratitude Project." The chapter also earned an Honors in Action Distinguished Theme Award.

"I am really proud of what our students

achieved this year," Briggs said. "They did an exceptional job and represented EMCC well as members of Phi Theta Kappa."

Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society members Lindsey Younger from the Golden Triangle campus and Morgan Moody from the college's Scooba campus were named to the 2022 Order of the Golden Key, which recognizes chapter members who embody the areas of scholarship, leadership, service and fellowship.

Aurora prototype on display at EMCC



Aurora Flight Science, a Boeing company, loaned a passenger air vehicle (PAV) prototype to EMCC for display in the Imagination Center at The Community, a space dedicated for products produced by local manufacturers. EMCC conducts group tours for area K-12 students at The Community, a state-of-the-art facility dedicated to training students for careers in advanced manufacturing. The PAV display is intended to pique the interest of tomorrow's engineers and technicians, who may choose a career in the aerospace industry.

Mayor tours EMCC Adult Ed facility



In September, Columbus Mayor Dr. Keith Gaskin visited with students enrolled in the Adult Education Launch Pad East in Columbus. Gaskin, who also sits on EMCC's Board of Trustees, toured the facility and spoke to faculty and staff about available Adult Education programs. EMCC's Adult Education department also has locations at the college's campuses in Mayhew, Scooba and West Point and offers a variety of classes to students at no cost.

Gibson crowned during Beauty Revue



Webster County native Annie Grace Gibson of Starkville was chosen Most Beautiful in EMCC's 2022 Beauty Revue held in April in the Stennis Hall auditorium on the college's Scooba campus. Gibson, at left, is shown being crowned by 2021 winner Curtlyn Blake. EMCC's award-winning pageant was a part of the annual Pine Grove Arts Festival, which takes place on the Scooba and Golden Triangle campuses.

PHILANTHROPY

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EMCC alumna Linda Kay Chandler of Maben is an author and artist who released her first book of poetry in 2022. She is a 2000 graduate of EMCC and a 2006 graduate of Mississippi State University. Visit her website at www.lindakaychandler.com or email her at lindakaychandler@outlook.com

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IN MEMORIAM



**WILLIAM
'COACH BILLY'
BROWN (SHOF)**
DeKalb, MS
August 18, 2022

William "Coach Billy" Brown is an EMJC graduate who played for legendary football coach Bob "Bull Sullivan." He also played football for Livingston State University and for the U.S. Army. He earned a master's degree from Mississippi State University.

Brown began his coaching career at Shuqualak where he coached all sports for both boys and girls. He later coached football at Okalona and all sports at Nanih Waiya. Later, at DeKalb, he served as athletic director and coached football, girls' junior high basketball and track for both boys and girls. He finished his career at Kemper County High School after 33 years in the public school system.

During his tenure, the football team won nine out of 12 district titles. In 1977, Brown was selected as coach for the North Mississippi All-Star football game. He was inducted into the Mississippi Association of Coaches Hall of Fame in 1990. Brown is a 2002 inductee of the EMCC Sports Hall of Fame. He is survived by his wife, Frances; sons Bill (Melinda), Bud (Karen) and daughter Penny Pearson (Chuck); five grandsons Ross (Lauren), Clint (Jessie), Hunter and Reid Brown and Cody Pearson; and six great grandchildren.



**RICHARD LOUIS
FARR, SR.
(SHOF)**
Meridian, MS
February 10, 2022

Richard "Rick" Louis Farr, Sr. graduated from Meridian High School in 1961 and earned a football scholarship to play on East Mississippi Junior College football coach Bob "Bull" Sullivan's team. He also played baseball for the Lions. Afterwards, Farr transferred to Mississippi College where he continued to play both football and baseball before graduating with a degree in education.

During his career in education, Farr taught and coached for seven high schools across the Southeast and officiated youth and high school sports for 32 years. He later embarked on a new career in medical sales, retiring from Anderson Regional Medical Center in Meridian in 2019.

In 2008, Farr was inducted into EMCC's Sports Hall of Fame. He was actively involved in both the EMCC and Mississippi College alumni associations and was a member of the Meridian Rock Steady Boxing Club. Throughout his life Farr was active in the communities in which he resided and the churches he attended. He is survived by his wife, Sue Sanders Farr; children, Richard Farr (Shirley), Lowery Farr (Peggy), and Emily Farr Brewer (Thomas); three grandchildren, Presley, Madden, and Griffin; brother, Sonny Farr; and numerous nieces, nephews, and other relatives.



**THOMAS F.
SCARBOROUGH
(SHOF)**
Decatur, MS
January 22, 2022

Thomas Scarborough was a two-year basketball letterman (1950-52) for East Mississippi Junior College before moving on to enjoy a stellar basketball career at Delta State. Following an outstanding prep career at Hickory High School, Scarborough helped lead the Lions to a two-year mark of 52-14 in earning all-state honors both seasons. At Delta State, he was named to the all-conference basketball squad and earned the team's best defensive player honor.

Upon graduation, Scarborough served in the U.S. Army and was based in Germany, serving as a cryptologist until 1956. Afterwards, Scarborough began a successful 25-year high school basketball coaching career in Arkansas and Mississippi. While at Madden High School, his teams claimed six county championships and he received two coach of the year honors. He completed his coaching career at Newton Academy, where his girls' team finished as state runners-up in 1985-86.

A member of EMCC's inaugural 2001 Sports Hall of Fame induction class, Scarborough worked for the Mississippi Employment Service from 1966-1984 prior to getting into the insurance/financial planning business, enjoying tremendous success as his company's top producer. He was inducted into the Mississippi Community College Sports Hall of Fame in 2010.

The EMCC family remembers those who passed away:

Edgar Adams
Virginia Beach, VA
July 7, 2022

Sheila Aust
Scooba, MS
January 25, 2022

Walter Baird
Hattiesburg, MS
November 3, 2021

Bill Frank Benton
Greenville, SC
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Dr. Tommy Davis
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Keith Harvey
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November 7, 2021

Rita Jane Smith Hill
Louisville, MS
November 19, 2021

Elizabeth "Inez" Hines
Brooksville, MS
August 28, 2022

William "Willie" Irons
Philadelphia, MS
September 17, 2022

Mike Luke (SHOF)
Preston, MS
October 12, 2022

Latitia McDade
DeKalb, MS
June 25, 2022

Clinton "Jack" Noe
Smithville, MS
November 17, 2021

Allie Mae Parker
Corinth, MS
August 28, 2022

Kenny Persons
Shuqualak, MS
March 26, 2022

Daryl Demone Ramsey
Columbus, MS
December 31, 2021

Benjamin Reese, Jr.
Calhoun City, MS
October 24, 2021

Thomas "Tom" Scarborough
(SHOF)
Decatur, MS
January 22, 2022

James Calvin Simpson, Jr.
Macon, MS
May 10, 2022

Debbie Stuart
Porterville, MS
January 29, 2022

Laura Persons Thomas
Wahalak, MS
June 7, 2022

**Jonathan Coleman "JC"
Weaver**
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Jesse Charles Williams
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April 19, 2022

EMCC INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT NOMINATION FORMS

EMCC SPORTS HALL OF FAME NOMINATION FORM

Name of Nominee _____

Address of Nominee _____

Years nominee attended EMJC/EMCC _____ Years nominee attended EMJC Agricultural High School _____

EMCC sports played and/or coached and honors received: _____

Sports played and/or coached and honors received in senior college: _____

Pro sports experience (teams and dates) and honors received: _____

Specific athletic and non-athletic accomplishments and honors: _____

Name, mailing address, telephone number and e-mail address of person submitting nomination: _____

Please include additional information to support your nomination on a separate sheet of paper and mail to the following address. Mail this form to: Foundation Office; EMCC; P.O. Box 158; Scooba, MS 39358. For more information, please call 662-476-5075 or 662-476-5063.

EMCC ALUMNA/ALUMNUS OF THE YEAR NOMINATION FORM

The recipient of this award will be honored on Homecoming Day. Award nominees must have attended EMCC at least 15 years ago for one semester or more. The recipient must be able to attend the Homecoming Day ceremony.

Name of Nominee _____

Address of Nominee _____

Years nominee attended EMJC/EMCC _____ Years nominee attended EMJC Agricultural High School _____

Highlight the strengths and accomplishments of the nominee: _____

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Clip and mail this completed nomination form to: Foundation Office; East Mississippi Community College; P.O. Box 158; Scooba, MS 39358. For more information, please call 662-476-5075 or 662-476-5063.

EMCC DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD NOMINATION FORM

The recipient of this award will be honored on Homecoming Day. Award nominees should have made outstanding contributions to EMCC in word and deed. Alumni status is not required for consideration, but the recipient must be able to attend the Homecoming Day ceremony.

Name of Nominee _____

Address of Nominee _____

Years nominee attended EMJC/EMCC _____ Years nominee attended EMJC Agricultural High School _____

Highlight the strengths and accomplishments of the nominee: _____

Name, mailing address, telephone number and e-mail address of person submitting nomination: _____

*Clip and mail this completed nomination form to: Foundation Office; East Mississippi Community College; P.O. Box 158; Scooba, MS 39358. For more information, please call 662-476-5075 or 662-476-5063. **The submission deadline for all nominations is May 1, 2023.***



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