

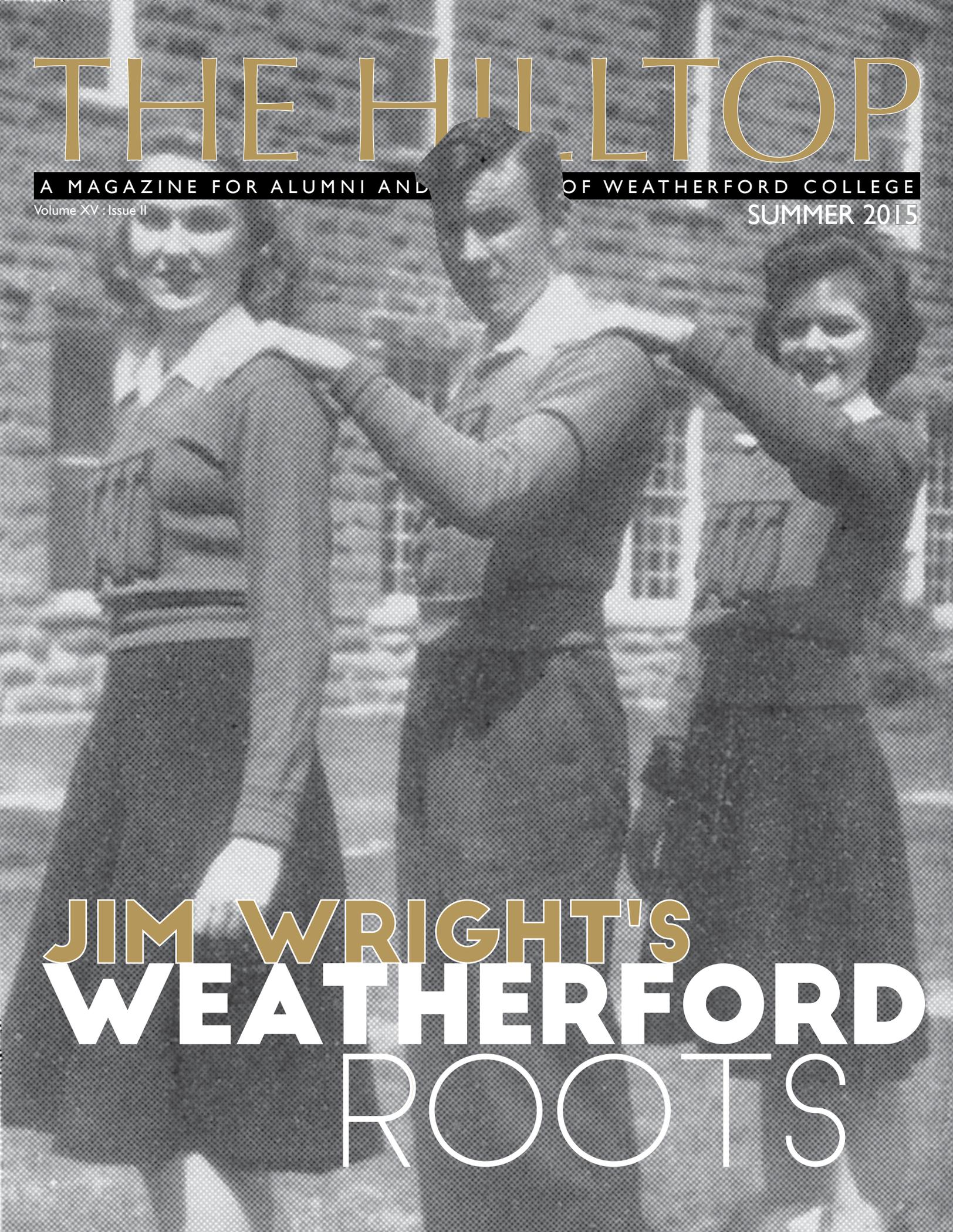
# THE HILLTOP

A MAGAZINE FOR ALUMNI AND

OF WEATHERFORD COLLEGE

Volume XV : Issue II

SUMMER 2015



## JIM WRIGHT'S WEATHERFORD ROOTS

# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



It's hard to believe that summer is here once again, and that means we are all in a state of transition. Graduating students are moving on to four-year universities or into the workforce, while others are continuing their studies with summer courses and an entirely new set of students are applying and enrolling for their first semester.

On May 9, Weatherford College held our annual commencement ceremonies at Weatherford High School's Durant Auditorium. Of the 932 students who completed a degree or certificate over the past academic year, 247 walked the stage during commencement and

were cheered on by nearly 2,000 guests.

Each year at graduation we recognize our newest Faculty Member of the Year. This year, Dr. Allison Stamatis, Associate Professor of Natural Sciences, was announced as the 2015 Faculty Member of the Year. Stamatis was one of 15 nominees for the award, and she was quite stunned when she was announced the winner. Over her seven years at WC, Stamatis has quickly become well respected by both her coworkers and her students. She regularly goes above and beyond what is required of her, and she is an amazing example of the quality educators who work at WC.

During our annual Alumni Awards Luncheon, the following individuals received recognition: Wayne Garrett was named Alumnus of the Year, while Dr. Bill Knight, Dr. Lisa Nash and Don Plumlee were each recognized as Distinguished Alumni.

But perhaps the most distinguished tribute Weatherford College has made over the past few months is the decision to name the campus library after former Speaker of the House Jim Wright. Members of the WC Board of Trustees made the naming decision at their June board meeting in honor of the late Speaker, who so graciously remembered his days at Weatherford College as some of the best of his life. We are proud to feature Jim Wright and his tales of WC as this edition's cover story. The Speaker Jim Wright Library will serve as a tribute to a wonderful man who always placed education as a priority.

In closing, as always, I invite all of you to take time to come tour our beautiful campus. It is full of history as well as new, state-of-the-art learning facilities. We are proud to be your community college, and we appreciate your continued support of Weatherford College.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin J. Eaton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kevin J. Eaton, Ed.D.  
President

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## JIM WRIGHT'S WEATHERFORD ROOTS

"I HAVE BEEN FORTUNATE. AND BLESSED. A BIG PART OF THAT BLESSING WAS GETTING TO LIVE IN WEATHERFORD AS A YOUTH. WHEREVER I'VE GONE, THE THINGS I LEARNED THERE HAVE GONE WITH ME. THEY ARE AN INSEPARABLE PART OF WHO I AM."

- JIM WRIGHT

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Wright graduated from Weatherford College in 1941 and was voted WC Alumnus of the Year in 1972.

---

by Crystal Brown

When former Speaker of the House Jim Wright passed away on May 6 at the age of 92, he left more than a Washington legacy. Wright's childhood and young adult life were greatly impacted by Weatherford, both the community and the college.

"I remember growing up next door to him, and he always talked about Weatherford College," said Jamie Bodiford-Brinkley. "Jim loved Weatherford College. He called it Old Main, and he said some of the greatest times he had were at WC."

Wright attended 10 different schools in seven different cities by the time he earned his high school diploma. Of all of the places he lived, he called Weatherford home.

The Wright family moved to Weatherford in 1931, just before the crippling effects of The Great Depression set in on his neighbors and family. His short time in Weatherford was filled with antics of dipping pretty girls' hair in ink, swimming in the Curtis Creek with friends until they found out the sewer dumped in just upstream, raising chickens and meeting hobos looking to work for food as they made their way to some far-off land of promise.

The family moved to Fort Worth a year later, but Jim's mother promised they would return one day.

"I always yearned for some place of permanence," Wright said during a media interview in 2001 before speaking at the special event "An Evening with the Speaker" at Weatherford College. "I had been moving every year and leaving friends. It broke my heart every time I had to leave, but it taught me to be adaptable, adjustable, to make new friends quickly... But Weatherford was roots."

In 1939, just after Jim graduated from Adamson High School in Dallas, the Wright family returned to Weatherford and purchased a home on the corner of Oak and Waco streets. It was a homecoming not only for Jim, but for his parents who had met at the 1912 Parker County Fair.

"Now that it was time for college, Weatherford seemed more than ever an ideal choice," Wright wrote in his book *Weatherford Days... A Time of Learnin'*. "By attending the local college, I could stay at home for my first two years of higher education and save a board bill for my parents."

Wright recalled there were less than 300 students attending the Old Main campus, and tuition ran about \$150 per semester.

While attending WC, Wright participated in numerous extracurricular activities including serving as the editor of *The Coyote* student newspaper. This title included the responsibility of selling enough advertising to cover the \$60 cost of producing the bi-weekly paper. Knowing that anything made beyond production costs could go into his pocket, Wright teamed up with friend Harold Owen, and together they turned a profit of \$30 apiece on their first publication.

"This was such a welcome bonanza to the two of us," Wright wrote in *Weatherford Days*.

His enthusiasm didn't stop with selling advertising for the paper, Wright was also known for writing some fiery editorials.

"We were, if nothing else, ardent devotees of free speech," he wrote. "Our unbridled exercise of that right got Harold and me into trouble with the powers-that-be at the college on two separate occasions."

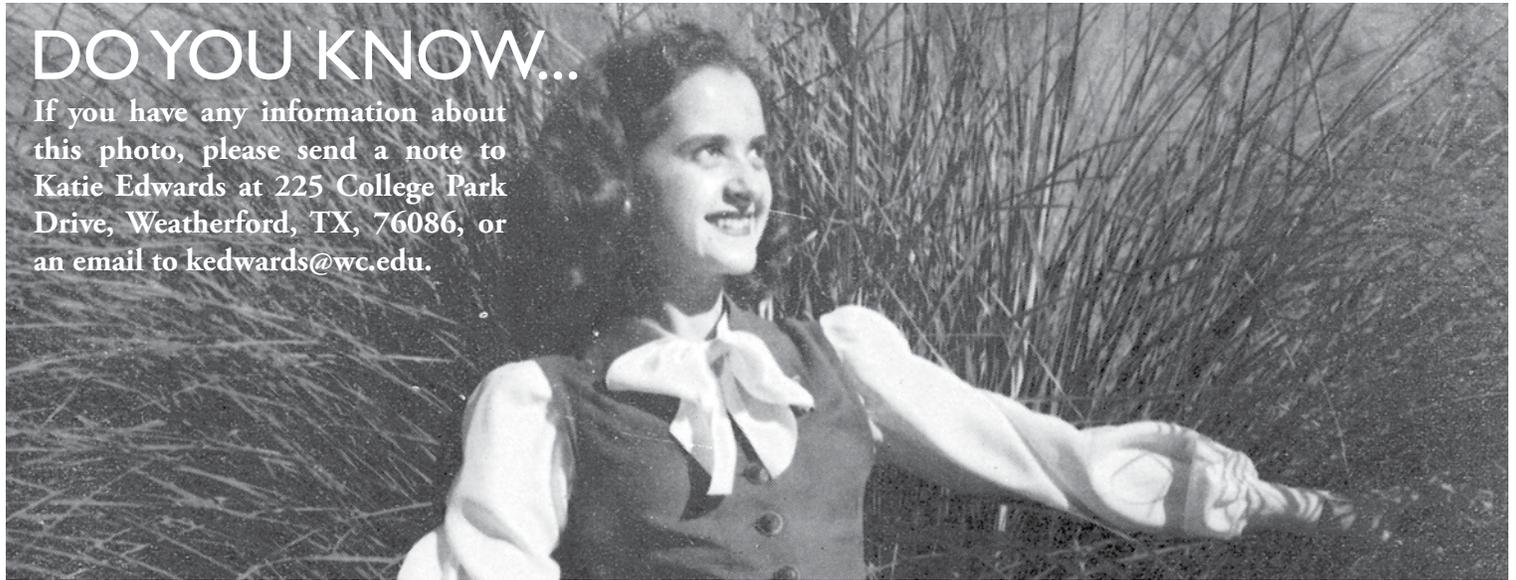
An editorial condemning the draft as "an insult to the patriotism of American

*continues with WRIGHT on page 11.*

# MEMORIES

## DO YOU KNOW...

If you have any information about this photo, please send a note to Katie Edwards at 225 College Park Drive, Weatherford, TX, 76086, or an email to [kedwards@wc.edu](mailto:kedwards@wc.edu).



## LAST ISSUE'S DO YOU KNOW...

A photo of the art club from the 1928 yearbook.



## FRIENDS WE'LL MISS



**Donald "Don" Ray Allen** of Weatherford passed away March 25. He was 68. He was a member of the WC Board of Trustees and was a longtime supporter of the College and its students.

**Jonell "Jodi" Barry** of Weatherford passed away March 1. She was 61 and a former employee of WC.

**Mary Green Clark** passed away April 29. She was 81.

**William Lester "Bill" Drawert** passed away April 21. He was 68.

**Tim Garrett** of Clyde passed away March 3. He was 62.

**Mayme Ruth Barber Heartsill** of Weatherford passed away Jan. 25. She was 93.

**James Clayton Huntsucker** of Granbury passed away June 9. He was 87.

**LaBelle Plumlee Lewellen** passed away May 25. She was 95.

**Ethan Keith Malone** passed away April 10. He was 29.

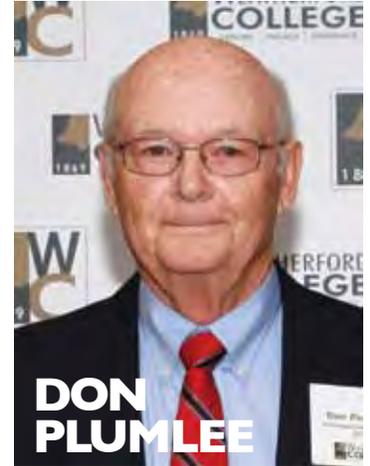
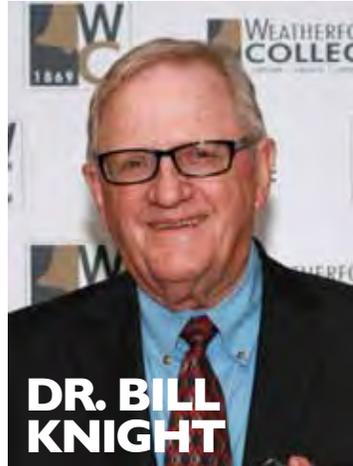
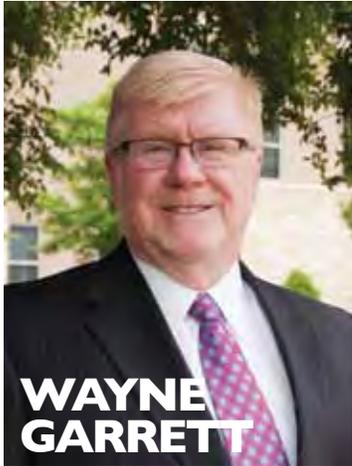
**Christelle Carter Phillips** passed away April 17. She was 98.

**Sammie Lee Good Walker** of Wichita Falls passed away May 28. She was 86.

**Cloud Manley "Rusty" Winstead Jr.** of Weatherford passed away June 8. He was 92.

**Stephen Bradley Wise** of Geneva, AL, passed away Feb. 26. He was 63.

# ALUMNI AWARDS



Weatherford College honored several outstanding former students at its Alumni Awards Luncheon in April.

Alumni came from as far away as Mineola to attend the luncheon, and graduates ranging from the class of 1942 to 2006 were present.

Brent Baker, Vice President of Institutional Advancement, made the comparison of WC alumni to the works of a successful painter or architect. The artist knows they did a good job because of the beautiful painting they complete. An architect can look at a building of their own design and see their hard work come to fruition.

“Well, as a college, we know that the faculty and others that came before us did a great job because of our alumni,” Baker said. “You are the most important resource Weatherford College has.”

Dr. Bill Knight, Dr. Lisa Nash and Don Plumlee were all honored as Distinguished Alumni and shared stories of their time

at WC. Local businessman and civic leader Wayne Garrett was honored as the 2015 Alumnus of the Year.

“Weatherford College was a big thing for me,” Garrett said. “I needed it. I come from a very good family, but a poor family. I couldn’t afford to go to college had it not been for Weatherford.”

Garrett attended WC from 1972 to 1974 and studied accounting. He went on to partner Snow Garrett Williams CPAs and is the CEO of Snow Garrett Wealth Management among other business endeavors.

He recalled a specific day during his first few weeks as a freshman when an instructor pulled him aside and gave him some words of advice. She encouraged him to be passionate about learning, to always give back and try harder.

“That was the most valuable thing anyone ever told me,” he said. “It was because a professor at this little college cared enough to stop, pull me aside and encourage me.”



## FACULTY MEMBER OF THE YEAR

Dr. Allison Stamatis, Associate Professor of Natural Sciences, was caught by surprise during the Weatherford College commencement ceremony in May when she was announced as the 2015 Faculty Member of the Year.

“I was incredibly surprised to receive this award,” Stamatis said. “I was and still am, a little bit in shock to receive such an honor. The people who have been selected for this award in the past are colleagues who I hold in very high regard, so I do not take such an honor lightly.”

Stamatis has worked at WC for seven years and has quickly become a well-respected instructor by both her coworkers and her students. She said her favorite part of each academic year is watching her students walk across the stage at graduation.

“I am so proud of all that they have accomplished, and I am privileged to play a part in that success,” she said.

Her title of Faculty Member of the Year comes with airfare for two to the U.S. destination of her choice and the \$1,000 Gayle and Wanda Grant Award of Teaching Excellence, both provided by the Weatherford College Foundation.

Since her family already has this summer’s vacation mapped out, Stamatis plans on holding on to the prize until the following year and taking an ecotourism vacation to a tropical rainforest.

# WEATHERFORD COLLEGE AROUND CAMPUS



1.



2.



3.

1. 247 graduates walked across the stage Saturday, May 9, after completing their associate's degrees at Weatherford College.

Approximately 60 percent of these graduates are transferring to four-year universities for further studies. The remaining graduates are ready to enter the workforce in fields such as health sciences, fire science, public service, social service/counseling, technology, business and agriculture.

2. Weatherford College Wise County has been awarded a \$3,488 Community Engagement Grant from ConocoPhillips.

These grant funds will be used to secure access of the Fort Worth Science and History Museum's mobile planetarium unit for the campus' STEMania day later this year.

STEMania is an opportunity for area fourth graders and their teachers to visit a college setting and experience hands-on science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) activities. More than 700 fourth graders and 300 volunteers from Wise and Jack County participated in the 2014 STEMania day at WCWC.

3. WC President Dr. Kevin Eaton presented outgoing board member Betty Jo Graber with an award of appreciation for her time on the board during the April 9 Board of Trustees meeting.

4. The Weatherford College Respiratory Care Program has received the Distinguished RRT Credentialing Success Award presented by the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care.

Out of the 425 programs nationwide, only 62 accredited programs received this award in 2015.

5. This year's Taste of Parker County netted approximately \$20,000 for the Weatherford College Foundation. Hungry supporters of the Foundation gathered at Canyon West Golf Club on May 14 to sample food and drinks from eateries across the county. First place winners, voted on by the attendees, are Best Entrée – Fish Creek, Best Dessert – Jeri's Back Home Bakery, Best Beverage – Rahr & Sons Brewing Co., Best Décor – Short Chef Creations, Most Unique – Windy Hill Farm Bakery, Best Overall – Fish Creek.

6. On Earth Day, April 22, representatives from several community



organizations promoting a greener, cleaner Earth presented informational booths, along with a Tesla Model S Car, and an art installation showcasing how many bottles the Weatherford campus collected over a week and a half.

7. The Weatherford College drama group brought home several awards in March from the Texas Play Festival held at Lone Star College in Kingwood where they presented *Bank Job*.

8. The WC Humanities Department organized a study abroad trip to Switzerland, Italy and France in May. Pictured on the Reuss River in Lucerne, Switzerland, are (left to right) Katelyn Rodgers, Anna Holt, Juana Velazquez and Emily Ruppe.



# THANK YOU

to the following donors who gave recent gifts to the WC Foundation (as of June 15, 2015)

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Frances Trussell  
Jon and Dottie Vandagriff  
WC Associate Degree  
Nursing Class  
WC Basketball Booster Club  
WC Board of Trustees  
Weatherford Noon Lion's Club  
Dr. Mike and Avalon White  
Weatherford High School  
Class of 1953  
Kathy P. Williams  
Rena Mae Woody  
Dinah Wren  
Gail Wright



## PHI THETA KAPPA HONOR SOCIETY BRINGS HOME AWARDS

WC's Phi Chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society attended the Society's international convention, Nerd Nation, held in San Antonio this past April and brought home many awards

Regional awards: Texas Top Chapter, College Project Award of Merit, Honors in Action Award of Distinction and the Congeniality Award. Dr. Trey Jansen was named to the Hall of Honor for Advisors, Jason Avelson was named to the Hall of Honor for Members, Dean Michael Endy was named to the Hall of Honor for Outstanding Administrators, Dr. Molly Harris was named Most Distinguished Advisor, Joe Nickowski was awarded the Tejas Award and Barry Stout, Aaron West, Avelson and Rocco Davidson were all placed in the District II Hall of Honor. Phi Chapter was also elected Texas Regional President, and Avelson was selected by the chapter to represent them in that position.

International awards: Five Star Chapter and Top 100 Chapter. Avelson was named a CollegeFish FishFanatic. West and Davidson received the Distinguished Officer Team award, Avelson was named a Distinguished Member, Dr. Jansen received the Paragon Award for New Advisors, Dr. Harris was named Distinguished Chapter Advisor and Dean Endy was named a Distinguished College Administrator. ☑

## NEW BOARD MEMBERS SWORN IN

During the June 11 meeting, new Board of Trustees member Elaine Carter and returning members Joel Watson and Dr. Trev Dixon were sworn into office by Justice of the Peace Dusty Vinson.

Carter, Watson and Dixon all ran unopposed in the May election. Carter is beginning her second stint as a trustee, having served from 2009 to 2013. Watson and Dixon were both elected in 2009 and are each entering a second consecutive six-year term.



## NISOD AWARD WINNERS

Mike McGough, Dawn Kahlden, Adam Findley, John Dougherty, and Quinton Reeves receive their NISOD Excellence Awards. Diane Slocum and Michelle Owens also received NISOD awards, but were not available during the group photo. The National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development is an outreach organization of the community college doctoral concentration at the University of Texas at Austin.

## CLASS NOTES

**Jolene G. Applegate** graduated Summa Cum Laude from Texas A&M-Commerce in May with a bachelor's degree in Organizational Leadership.

**Alexander Ayres** ('13) graduated Cum Laude from Tarleton State in May. She and her husband, John, are expecting their first child in July.

**Cali Clower** ('15) will marry Justin Quisenberry this summer and will teach first grade in Chillicothe this fall. She graduated from Tarleton State in May.

**Edward Dealecio** ('12) was named runner-up in the Chicago Brass Festival's solo brass competition in March. Edward is now studying at the University of Texas at Arlington.

**Vonnie Erwin** ('08) has completed her master's degree at Southern New Hampshire University. She graduated from WC's Associate Degree Nursing program and is now a Hyperbaric Oxygen Chamber Specialist and Nurse at Weatherford Regional Wound Care Center.

**Katie Fron** ('09) is now a Registered Nurse in the Emergency Room at Texas Health Harris Methodist Hospital in Downtown Fort Worth.

**Rebekah Gibson** ('15) won the Robert Elliot Student Teaching Award from

Tarleton State University and graduated with a bachelor's degree in May.

**Leah Graber** ('66) celebrated her 90th birthday on June 30.

**Lauren Ball Greer** graduated Cum Laude from Tarleton State in May.

**John Griffith** ('14) will teach at Trinity Christian Academy in Willow Park after graduating with a bachelor's degree from Tarleton State in May.

**Jeff Guess** ('14) will teach fifth grade math at Godley Intermediate School after graduating from Tarleton State in May.

**Elizabeth Hatter** is now working on her master's degree in Library Science at the University of North Texas.

**Hart Hering** ('04) has been hired as the new Head Baseball Coach at Brock High School. Hering was WC's first starting pitcher, played at Texas A&M, and most recently was an assistant coach at Tyler Lee High School.

**Krystal McDaniel** ('15) graduated Magna Cum Laude from Tarleton State in May.

**Dr. Darryl McEndree** ('92) has joined Pet Western Animal Hospital in Mineral Wells as a veterinarian. Daryl attended WC on a meat judging scholarship, moved on to Texas Tech and Texas A&M, and practiced in Aledo before moving to Mineral Wells.

**Elizabeth McKeever Pecina** ('13) will teach first grade in Boyd after graduating from Tarleton State in May.

**William Plusnick** ('12), earned his bachelor of science degree in Physics from the University of Texas at Austin in May.

**Michelle Recchia** ('13) will teach fourth grade in Gainesville after graduating from Tarleton State in May.

**Richelle Smith** ('12) will work on her master's degree in Political Science this fall at Tarleton State.

**Holley Thornton** ('13) graduated Cum Laude from Tarleton State in May.

**Phyllis Tiffin** earned her Licensed Professional Counselor licensure from the State of Texas in February and has been certified to teach Mental Health First Aid curriculum in area school districts.

**Misty Triem** ('06) will teach Kindergarten in the Millsap ISD. She graduated from Tarleton State in May.

**Elizabeth Farris Van Hoose** will teach first grade in Springtown after graduating from Tarleton State in May.

# ATHLETICS - A YEAR IN REVIEW



VLATKO GRANIC



BETHANY ALLEN



RAYVON CHRISTIAN



QUINTIN ROHRBAUGH



CNFR QUALIFIERS: MACY, TEW, HARMON, COOKE AND COACH EMMONS

## WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

The Lady Coyotes (14-12) advanced to their fifth consecutive regional tournament in March. Rayvon Christian was voted the Newcomer of the Year in the North Texas Junior College Athletic Conference, C.J. Johnson led the conference in scoring with a 19.1 points per game average and Zippy Khasoa led the league in rebounds (10.7).

## MEN'S BASKETBALL

The Coyotes (19-12) had one of their best seasons in the last several years, returning to the Region V Tournament for the first time since 2012. Vlatko Granic was the NTJCAC Freshman of the Year. WC won six of their last seven regular season games and took powerhouse Howard to overtime in a regional tournament loss.

## SOFTBALL

In their fourth season, the Coyotes (32-16) advanced to the Region V-North Tournament again. Three WC players earned All-Region and All-Conference honors: freshman catcher Liz Konig, freshman infielder Bethany Allen and sophomore outfielder Alex Kovacs.

## BASEBALL

The Coyotes (39-15) matched the program record for wins and lost the fewest games in school history. WC spent most of the season in the national Top-20 and was even ranked No. 1 in the nation in April. Matt Walker was named NTJCAC Pitcher of the year and Quintin Rohrbaugh earned the Hitter of the Year Award. Rohrbaugh and Zac Michener were named All-Region. WC returned to the Region V Tournament for the fifth time in the past six years.

## RODEO

For the eleventh consecutive year, WC sent athletes to the College National Finals Rodeo in Casper, Wyoming. In the Southwest Region standings, Casey Tew won his second consecutive title in team roping, Seth Cooke was the reserve champion in tie down roping, Coledon Harmon won the reserve title in steer wrestling and Aaron Macy was the reserve heading champion in team roping. At the CNFR, Tew finished in sixth place in team roping and Harmon was eighth in steer wrestling.

# WC EX WINS ALL-AROUND RODEO NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP



A former Weatherford College rodeo athlete won the men's All-Around national championship at the College National Finals Rodeo. Landon Williams, now at Tarleton State, won the title June 20 in Casper, Wyoming.

Williams finished with 445 points, 150 more than his second-place competitor. 280 of his points came from winning the national title in tie down roping, with the rest earned from a sixth place finish in team roping, paired with current WC student Casey Tew.

"I am so proud of Landon," said Johnny Emmons, Head Rodeo Coach at WC and Williams' coach from 2012 to 2014. "To see him win two national titles in his senior year is one of the proudest moments of my coaching career." 📷



## WC BOARD VOTES TO NAME LIBRARY IN HONOR OF JIM WRIGHT

In their June meeting, members of the WC Board of Trustees voted to name the campus library the Speaker Jim Wright Library in honor of the notable alumnus who passed away in May.

"Throughout his illustrious career, Speaker Wright always talked about Weatherford College and the impact the college had on his life," said Brent Baker, Vice President of Institutional Advancement. "He was very proud of his roots at WC, and the College has always been extremely proud of what he accomplished in decades of public service."

Board Chairman Frank Martin, who made the motion to name the facility after Wright, asked the administration to plan a dedication ceremony for the fall.

"Everyone knows what an impact he made on his country, his state and his hometown, back to the time he attended Weatherford College," Martin said. 📷

### WRIGHT *from page 3.*

youth" and another calling for the church-affiliated school to sponsor dances caught the attention of the college's Board of Trustees who suggested Wright be removed as editor of the paper. Instead, Professor Sam Householder, who was the faculty member in charge of *The Coyote*, began requiring his approval on all editorials before they went to print. Wright balked at the idea of "censorship" at first, but after a discussion of how it put his professor's job at stake, apologized and began turning in columns for a once-over before they were published.

"That agreement was a boon to me," Wright wrote. "There were things I learned from Sam Householder, and – little as I enjoyed admitting it – much that I needed to learn."

Always the joiner, Wright participated in the WC Chorus, the International Relations Club, drama and was a Yell Leader.

As part of the International Relations Club, basically a debate club, Wright participated in an annual conference in Fayetteville, Arkansas, where he was elected regional vice president of the organization.

"It was fun to bring that title back to one of the smallest colleges represented at the meet," Wright wrote. "Next to editing the college paper, my most useful experience probably came from representing our school in intercollegiate debate."

One of his most difficult competitions was against a Kilgore College student named John Hill. The two became good friends later at the University of Texas, and Hill went on to serve as Texas Secretary of State, Attorney General and Chief Justice of the Texas Supreme Court.

Participating in drama was more a labor of love than of talent for Wright. After being cast opposite Mary Ethelyn "Mab" Lemons he tried out for every production that came along.

"She was a drama major and the student body's most accomplished actress," wrote Wright about the woman who would later become his wife of 30 years. (For the last 43 years of his life he was married to Betty Hay.)

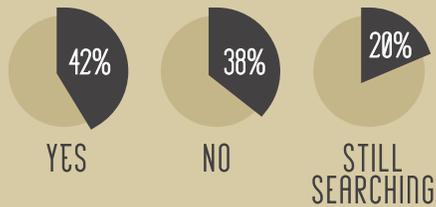
A bid for student body president his sophomore year didn't go in Wright's favor, but did lead to his election as the editor of the school paper. He attributed this failure to providing him the "much-needed discipline of responsibility" which would benefit him later in life.

"Later, my failure to be re-elected to the State Legislature led me to concentrate on business and then to be selected mayor of Weatherford," he wrote. "That in turn led me to Congress. A near-miss for the U.S. Senate in 1961 kept me in the House, where in 1987 I was elected Speaker. I have been fortunate. And blessed. A big part of that blessing was getting to live in Weatherford as a youth. Wherever I've gone, the things I learned there have gone with me. They are an inseparable part of who I am." 📷

# 2015 Commencement SURVEY

A SURVEY OF STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN WC'S MAY 2015 COMMENCEMENT

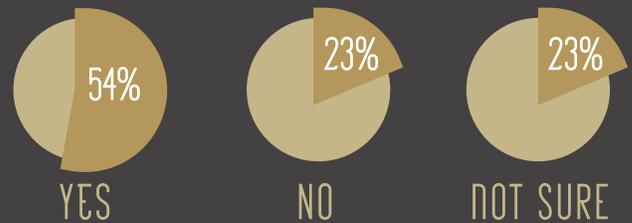
HAVE YOU OBTAINED FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT?



IF YES, IS THIS POSITION RELATED TO YOUR MAJOR?



ARE YOU TRANSFERRING TO A 4-YEAR COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY?



WHAT SCHOOLS DID WC GRADS CHOOSE?  
(PERCENTAGE OF GRADUATES PLANNING TO TRANSFER TO UNIVERSITIES)

