

Tuesday, November 27, 2018

Volume XI, Issue IV

## Get Involved

### Viking Deadline

Friday, Jan. 18

Send all submissions to the editor, **Kassandra Garcia** at [Kaegarcia@vikings.grayson.edu](mailto:Kaegarcia@vikings.grayson.edu). Remember, anyone can contribute!

### Student Leadership Series

TBA

### Student and Employee Spirit Day

Every Friday

Wear your GC attire with blue jeans and celebrate the Viking spirit.

## Clubs & Orgs

### Baptist Student Ministries

Wednesdays, 12:00 p.m.  
BSM building

### Clay Club

First Thursdays, 5 - 6 p.m.

Ceramic Room, Arts & Communications

### Cosmetology Club

Tuesdays bi-weekly  
8:30- 9:30 a.m., CTC

### Cultural Diversity Club

Second and fourth Mondays  
1 - 2 p.m., Int'l Student Office

### DAAC

Fridays, 12:45 p.m., HS 202

### Delta Phi Delta (Art)

First Tuesdays, 12:15 p.m.  
Design Room

Arts & Communications

### Dental Assisting Club

Wednesdays, 11:30 - 12 p.m.  
HS 205

### Electrical Technology Club

TBA  
Contact Aimee Flynn  
903-463-8684

### Eta Sigma Delta

First Tuesdays, 3 p.m.  
Culinary Arts Building

### FCA

TBA

### Future Educators

Every other Tuesday  
12:20 - 12:50 p.m., CIS 200

### Gamers Guild

First Thursdays, 4:00 p.m.  
Design Room,  
Arts & Communications

### Grayson Nursing Student Association

Wednesday or Friday  
11:30 a.m.  
Viking Room, Life Center

### HALO (Hispanic-American Leadership Organization)

Second and fourth Tuesday  
12:00 - 1:00 p.m.  
Grayson Room, Cafeteria

### History Club

Wednesdays, 2:30 p.m.  
LA 207, Liberal Arts

### Honors College Club

Thursdays, 12:15 - 1 p.m.  
Viking Room, Life Center

### HVACR Club

First Thursdays  
5:30 p.m.  
CTC Room 117

### LEA

#### (Criminal Justice)

Tuesdays  
12:30-1:30 p.m.  
Location TBA

### Men of Distinction

Thursdays, 12 - 1 p.m.  
Study Room 5, Library

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Please recycle this paper!

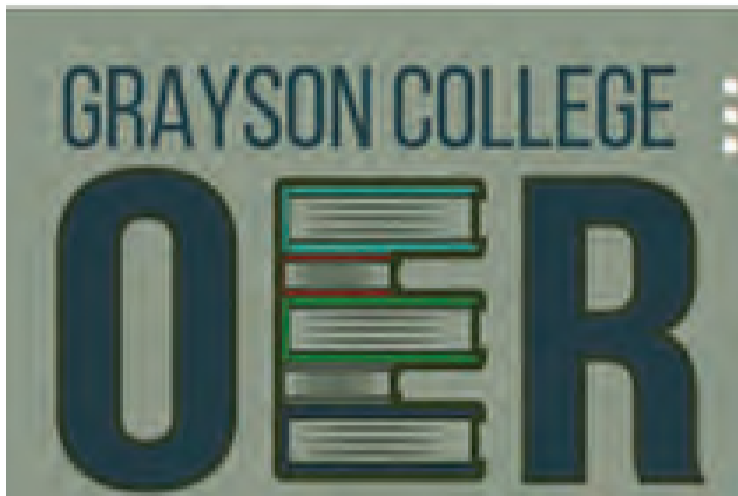
## Free Textbooks at Grayson College!

By Todd Ellis, Director of Teaching and Learning

Did you know that twelve courses here at Grayson College have free textbooks?

These free and re-usable textbooks are one of the many benefits to students of Open Educational Resources (OER's). The global OER movement is over twenty years old and growing. The use of OER's is growing here at Grayson College as well.

The OER movement can trace its roots to a 1994 National Science Foundation grant led by James Sphorer at California State University which developed MERLOT, a repository for free online curriculum material for higher education. In 1998 assistant professor David Wiley at Utah State University was instrumental in proposing a license for free and open content as an alternative to full copyright.



Look for the Dashboard button in Spring

His work eventually led to the creation of the Creative Commons license used today to license open material worldwide. Throughout the history of the OER movement, the Hewlett Foundation has contributed more than \$170 million globally in order to ensure the growth and sustainability of the human right to access education. The OER movement parallels and is closely related to the Open Source movement in information technology.

High-quality open educational resources can be found and downloaded today from credible institutions such as the Massachusetts Institute of Technology with its MIT Open Courseware MITOCW.org, California State University's MERLOT.org, Rice University's Openstax.org, iTunes U and dozens of others.

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## Biomedical Engineering on the Rise

By Abigail Gilbreath, Student

Biomedical Engineering, better known as BME, is considered one of the fastest-growing careers, according to CNN. Due to the constant need for advancements in health care and treating patients, the demand for biomedical engineers will continue to increase. With the application of problem-solving techniques and principles, biomedical engineers can complete tasks ranging from diagnosis and analysis to treatment and recovery of patients.

BME specialists, such as John Smith, have entered the public consciousness through the proliferation of implantable medical devices such as pacemakers and artificial hips. However, even with the newest innovations in the BME community, the biomedical engineering profession is not as well known as other engineering occupations, for example: mechanical, industrial, electrical and civil engineering.

Biomedical Engineering is analyzing and designing solutions to problems in biology and medicine. This research is all done with the goal of improving the quality and effectiveness of patient care. Some of the recent advancements in this field have been bionic contact lens, robots helping perform surgeries, and the Berkeley bionics eLEGS exoskeleton.

Prosthetic technology has also made major advancements due to the hard work of biomedical engineers. This "bionic" heart is one of the new technologies that is being researched at the moment. Chip-enabled prosthetics like this allow amputees to control them with their minds, according to Fred

Pennic in *IT Healthcare News*.

"A biomedical engineer works as a part of a team which creates a device, procedure or system that will aid in health-care..." stated Smith, a thirty-seven-year-old biomedical engineer in North Texas. During his coursework at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Smith designed implants aimed at repairing the spinal cord.



Bionic prosthetic heart created by biomedical engineers (<https://hitconsultant.net/2017/05/16/biomedical-engineering-trends/>)

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## Supporting the Dream

By Cynthia Perez, Administrative Assistant III

The Grayson College Foundation celebrated another successful year of providing scholarships to students. At the Supporting the Dream Dinner, our donors had the chance to meet their student(s) that earn their scholarship(s). It is a great opportunity for both of them to connect with each other. For the academic year 2018/2019, the Foundation awarded 555 scholarships for a total over \$546,000.



Supporting The Dream scholarship donors and recipients enjoying dinner at the Hilton Garden Inn



(Left) President Jeremy McMillen encourages both donors and recipients to continue to support Grayson



(Right) Randall Truxal, Executive Director for Grayson College Foundation, commends both donors and recipients



## Knowing Your Financial Aid Eligibility

By Alisha Danner &amp; Wayne Ryon, Financial Aid Advisors

With finals just around the corner, it will soon be time for the Financial Aid Office to run Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP). When we run SAP, a student's financial aid status will be updated for the next semester they attend to one of the following statuses: good standing, warning, or suspension.

### Financial Aid Statuses

Students who are on **Good Standing** have at least a 2.00 cumulative GPA and at least a 67% Pace (your hours you have attempted versus the hours you actually earned). These students are eligible to continue to receive financial aid.

Students who are placed on **Warning** have dropped below the required cumulative 2.0 GPA and/or the required cumulative 67% Pace; however, they will still have financial aid eligibility for the next semester they attend. This warning semester is meant to give the student the opportunity to bring their GPA and/or Pace back to the required minimums.

A student who is placed on **Suspension** is no longer eligible for financial aid. A student can be placed on suspension for two reasons.

1. If after a student's warning semester they do not bring their Pace and/or GPA back to the required minimums, they are placed on financial aid suspension. A student who is on suspension for this reason will remain on suspension until either: they bring their cumulative GPA back to at least a 2.00 and their cumulative Pace back to at least 67%, or they file a financial aid appeal and it is approved.

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**Music Club**

Every other Friday  
1 - 2 p.m., Choir Room,  
Arts & Communications

**Phi Theta Kappa**

Wednesdays  
12:30 - 1 p.m.  
Viking Room, Life Center

**Psychology Club**

Thursdays, 12:15 - 1 p.m.  
CIS 202

**Radiology Tech Club**

The 15th of every month  
5:30 - 7:30 p.m.  
HS 200

**Rotaract**

Wednesdays  
3 - 4 p.m.  
Viking Room, Life Center

**Science Club**

1st and 3rd Fridays  
1:00 - 2:00 p.m.  
S 106, Science Building

**Student Government Association**

First Mondays  
12:15 - 12:45 p.m.  
Viking Room, Life Center

**Sisters of Destiny**

Every other Thursday,  
12:15 - 1 p.m.  
Conference Room, Life Center

**Student Ambassadors**

Third Mondays, 12 - 1 p.m.  
Viking Room, Life Center

**Student Veterans Association (SVA)**

1st and 3rd Wednesdays  
Veterans' Hub (2nd floor of  
Life Center) 12 - 1:00 p.m.

**TIPPS (Culinary Arts)**

First Tuesdays, 2 - 3:00 p.m.  
691 Restaurant, Culinary Arts

**Veteran Nursing Student Association**

First Mondays, 12 p.m.  
South Campus Skills Lab

**Vocational Nursing Student Association**

First and third Wednesdays,  
12 - 1 p.m.  
Veteran's Hub, Life Center

**Welding Technologies Association**

First and third Tuesdays,  
12 - 1 p.m. CTC Break Room  
First and third Tuesdays,  
12 - 1 p.m. South Campus

**Writers Unlimited**

Every other Tuesday  
12:20-12:50 p.m.  
Study Room 5, Library

# How to Survive College

By Trenton Paskero, Student

“College can be one of the greatest experiences in your life, but it also can be one of the most hectic. I experienced both spectrums during my freshman year but was able to find my way through it,” says Texas Woman’s University junior, Ryan Burnett. The transition between high school and college can prove to be challenging, even for the most prepared. However, there are ways to make this transition one of the most memorable and special times in a young student’s life.

The first step on a student’s journey to college can easily be one of the most challenging. So often, upcoming freshmen run into difficulties throughout the application process, whether it be applying for financial aid, applying for scholarships, seeking the opportunity to play an extracurricular sport, or just trying to get accepted into the college of their choice.

High school seniors can find themselves overburdened and confused by these multiple steps during the college application process, says Texas Tech University freshman Hunter Reed.

“There were multiple times where I thought I was finished [with the application process] but would soon find out there was another step,” Reed comments. To combat this frustration, he explains, “I would’ve applied way earlier. The process is long, and I almost missed the deadline.”

Another piece of advice commonly given to incoming freshmen is to apply for more scholarships than they think they need, as money can easily run short throughout college, says Centenary College of Louisiana freshman Alyssa Davis. “[Scholarships] helped pay for most of my college, so I don’t have to worry about debt once I graduate, and I can go to grad school and still be good,”

says Davis.

Part-time jobs in high school can also be a valuable source of money and experience. Reed states, “I did a few construction jobs in [my senior year]. It helped my work ethic a lot.” With this tactic, students can learn how to work a job while managing other school-related tasks and save the money for graduation.

Another difficulty that arises from being a freshman in college is the transition period from high school. Most freshmen find this period stressful because they are still working on acclimating to their new college environment. Richland Junior College freshman Michael Shulze explains, “I had to move all of my belongings five hours away, which was awful.

I had to move from a town that’s really small to a huge town, which was very unpleasant...the social and culture shock were also extremely stressful.” Most college classes start off at a slow pace, but the course requirements rapidly accelerate. If students don’t start hitting the books early in the semester, they will find themselves falling behind once big projects come along, Reed concludes.

These factors, and many more, can lead to stress and anxiety taking hold in a college freshman’s life. Burnett says, “I tried to do too much at once my [freshman year] and got burnt out by my second semester, and that’s where I struggled.” A common problem that freshmen have is figuring out how to adjust to a completely new learning environment. This change in work style can cause great difficulty and stress in students who can’t master the learning curve.

“Just don’t try to blow through college as fast as you can,” explains Burnett.

“Take your time, and just make good grades in every class. It’s okay if it takes you longer to graduate.”

Stress and anxiety are practically unavoidable in college. Studies, student debt, and formulating a social group are just a few of the vast amount of problems that arise in the average freshman’s life. With most college systems being as rigorous as they are, students almost don’t have time to take a step back and really consider the toll college is taking on their mental health.

Therefore, so many freshmen find themselves fighting a battle on two fronts: one against their studies and another against themselves. Burnett describes, “College was a huge change in work style...I would go to the fitness center whenever I needed a moment to myself or a break from studying.”

An escape can help relieve stress and anxiety for the time being, but a more guaranteed solution can be using student resources. A college counselor, for example, can be a beneficial resource. Counselors offer guidance to students who are dealing with problems that affect their mental well-being, says Stephanie Adams, licensed professional counselor and co-founder of The Counselors and Psychotherapists Network of North Texas.

“It is smart to work with a counselor to better understand your anxiety triggers, identify your most effective coping strategies, and generally look for ways to reduce stress in your life,” she emphasizes. “You are not alone. Your mind and body are just responding to the huge weight of stress on you.” Fortunately, anxiety is a highly treatable problem, and many of the previously mentioned methods will help stressed students feel free again.

# A Guide to a Being a Successful Transfer Student

By Cameron Winn, Student

Misty Berry, 48, is a graduate of the University of North Texas (UNT) in Denton with a bachelor’s degree in education. At the beginning of her sophomore year, Berry transferred from Brookhaven Community College in Farmers Branch, Texas, to UNT.

She described her initial emotions as “worrying, to say the least.” Berry said that “I felt like I had been thrown into a world that I was unprepared for” when she transferred to UNT. Berry was afraid that her Brookhaven classes wouldn’t transfer to UNT, and she would waste all the time and money that she had spent at Brookhaven.

When Berry met with her academic advisor at UNT, she was “prepared for the worst.” Instead, Berry was met with positive news. All her credits had transferred, and she had saved thousands of dollars by choosing to start her college education at a community college. Berry described this news as “the best news that she had heard in a very long time.” She described her transfer process as “very successful and beneficial.”

Transferring from a community college to a university might not be for everyone, though. Some students may prefer to spend all four years at a university because they have dreamt of it for years. Others may have been given the funds to cover their entire college expense by their parents or through scholarships.

Yet many students prefer to transfer from a community college to a university. Berry said that “going to the community college first was a good way to get my feet wet without jumping directly into a university, and I saved a lot of money, which was great for me because I had to pay 100% of my college.”

Berry treated community college as a transition from high school to a full-blown university. Because she had to pay for her college entirely by herself, she chose to save money at a community college, then transfer “because you can’t get a 4-year degree at a community college.” Berry believes that “students who have a limited budget and want to get a 4-year degree” are the ones who especially should investigate transferring from a community college to a university.

Financial aid and scholarships are both important factors of a student’s college expense because both resources enable students to save money. These assets allow low-income students to afford college and help pay for their many college-related expenses such as housing and food. She took advantage of “lots of financial aid” at Brookhaven and UNT.

Berry said that she had no issues with her financial aid transferring with her

and that “the financial aid office [at UNT] helped [her].” This example is a positive sign for community college students who worry about losing their financial aid if they transfer to a university.

Elyssa Sanchez, Senior Regional Advisor for Transfer Recruiting at Texas A&M University--College Station explained that at A&M all transfer students are eligible to apply for financial aid and scholarships. Megan Davis, Transfer Team Associate at Oklahoma State University (OSU) in Stillwater, Oklahoma, said that at OSU, there are specific scholarships available for transfer students. The Out-of-State Transfer Achievement Scholarship and the Out-of-State Transfer Legacy Scholarship are both reserved strictly for out-of-state transfer students. This is terrific news for students looking to transfer to a university, as they can expect to find no discrimination regarding financial aid and scholarships.

One of the biggest factors surrounding a transfer from a community college to a university is the task of figuring out whether a student’s class credits will transfer from one college to the other. College classes are not cheap, so when a student plans to transfer, they need to know exactly which classes to take in order spend their money wisely to ensure the maximum amount of credits transfer with them.

Luckily there are lots of resources available for students who worry about their credits transferring. Berry said that when she was working through the transfer process, she met with her school’s academic advisor, and “she told [Berry] which credits would transfer.”

Due to advancements in technology, the internet has become a useful resource for students who are planning to transfer. Sanchez said that all students have access to a “transfer course equivalency webpage,” which allows for directly comparing classes at two separate colleges. Sanchez recommends this tool to community college students who are setting up their schedule so that they know that their classes will be accepted at their transfer school before they take them. This transfer equivalency webpage is only one example of resources that universities offer transfer students.

Davis said that OSU has a Transfer Credit Guide, which allows for the same comparison as A&M’s transfer equivalency webpage. Davis made it apparent that “students must be admitted to the university and registered for New Student Orientation & Enrollment to receive an official course evaluation.” After registering, students will have ac-

cess to a course evaluation with their academic advisor.

Another issue that worries students who ponder the idea of transferring is the issue of housing. Some community colleges don’t have dorms, so some students who attend these schools either live with their parents or they live in an apartment. These students may worry that because they are a transfer student, they will not be given the same housing opportunities as an incoming freshman, preventing them from living on campus.

Luckily, “Housing [at A&M] is on a first-come, first served basis, and a student can only apply [for it] after they are admitted,” said Sanchez. Incoming freshmen do not have priority over transfer students, and transfer students just have to make sure they fill out a housing application to live on campus. Likewise, Davis said that OSU doesn’t discriminate against transfer students and even offers “married and family housing to accommodate as many students’ needs as possible.”

When a student decides they want to transfer from a community college to a university, the process can seem daunting at first. Sanchez said, “The first step is making sure the student is taking courses that will transfer and meet major-specific requirements.”

This means that it is important to check online using the transfer course equivalency website while setting up classes to make sure that all class credits will transfer with the student to the university.

It is also important for a student to apply for the transfer in advance. The term before they plan to attend, Sanchez and Davis both said students should also consider any further actions that a college requires to apply for a transfer. For example, at A&M, Sanchez said that along with an online application, an essay that is detailed on the A&M website is necessary.

Similarly, at OSU, Davis said that prospective students need to complete an application, along with official transcripts in order to be accepted into OSU. It is vital to a student’s success that they are fully informed about the transfer process so that they can take all the needed precautions to ensure their progression in their education.

# Student Loans Pay Off

By Jenna Haines, Student

Whether just out of high school, currently enrolled in college, or going back to school to earn a degree, many individuals will be faced with the choice of using student loans to help pay for tuition, books, and even room and board. In fact, according to an article published by the website *The Student Loan Report*, seventy percent of all college students and college graduates are using some form of student loans, which means that loans are affecting most students attending college.

Student loans can be a useful tool when a student does not have enough funding to attend their college of choice. However, the fear of accumulating large amounts of debt can leave many potential scholars reluctant to invest in their education. Madelyn Butler, a Leonard High School senior considering The University of Texas at Austin, expresses her concerns about student loans: "I won't go to college if I have to take out a ton of loans. I don't want to be in debt for the rest of my life."

Many of these fears come from being poorly informed about the loan system. "We're seeing more and more of our students not applying to college because the [financial] process is so daunting," comments Jeff Johnson, the assistant to the superintendent at Leonard High School.

The loan process can be easily misunderstood because every college is different when it comes to the financial aid they offer, but the process can be simplified with knowledge on a few of the most common loans. The Guide to Federal Student Aid for 2018-19 explains these loans in depth. This pamphlet is available in many high school counselors' offices.

A "subsidized loan" is where the government pays the interest while the student is enrolled at least half-time in college, whereas an "unsubsidized loan" is a loan that starts accruing interest immediately upon a student's acquiring the loan. "PLUS loans" are not based on financial need, but they accrue the most interest. "Perkins loans" are based on financial need.

All of these must be paid back in full, including interest. "There are many options when it comes to loans. When you're seventeen or eighteen, it can be hard to understand which one the best for your situation is," says Kacie Littrell, the guidance

counselor at Leonard High School. "I encourage students to visit the admissions office at their college of choice. The counselors can help explain their specific financial aid option," she adds.

While student loans are useful tools for financing higher education, there are ways to avoid over-using them. Most students are aware that scholarships can help when considering ways to pay

A repayment plan determines how much the borrower will be paying each month and how many years they will be paying off the loan. "...Only borrow what you need and what you feel that you can pay back," Danner cautions.

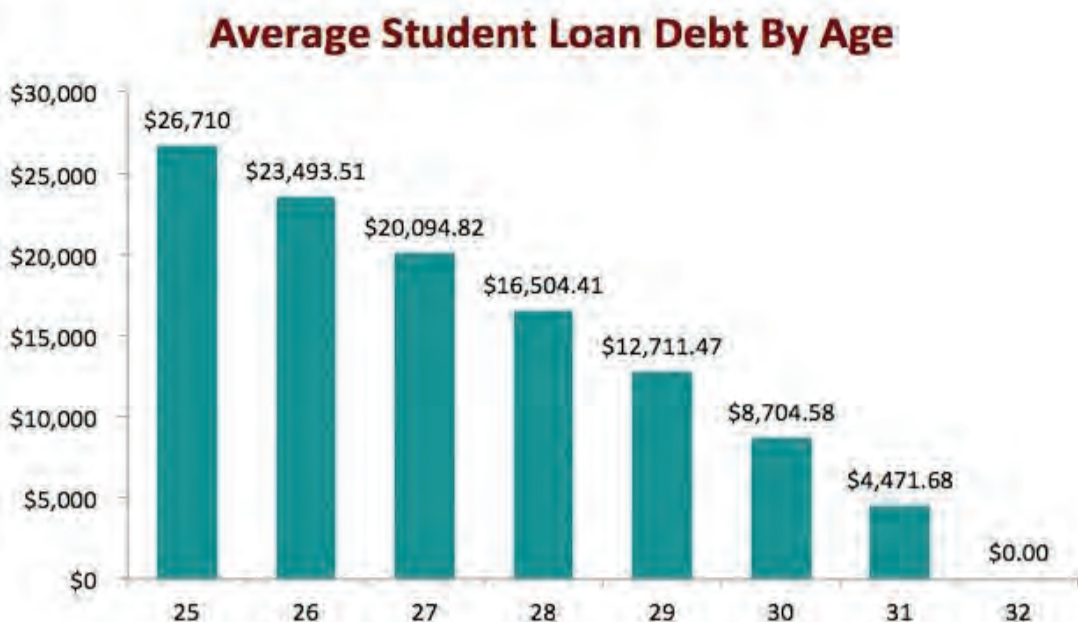
Even after a potential college student considers using scholarships, working a part-time job, and making a budget, they may still be wary of using loans for financing college due to preconceived ideas they, or their parents, have about the effect loans have on everyday life after graduation.

Due to experiences a relative may have had paying for college, stories on the news, or an article on the internet about excessive student debt, students may fear that loans will be a stress factor when they graduate. However, Chelsea Hathcoat, who took out student loans to finance her education, admits, "They [the loans] were a bit stressful the first year out of college, but now I only think about them once a month when the payment comes up."

Hathcoat graduated from the Trinity Valley College Nursing Program in 2009 and now works as a registered nurse at Baylor Surgicare in North Dallas. "I couldn't have gone to school if I hadn't used student loans," she claims. Hathcoat attributes her success in her nursing career to her education.

"My education was an investment. I wouldn't have the job that I have now without it," she acknowledges.

Student loans can be an intimidating subject when students don't understand them, so being well informed is necessary before applying. When used with scholarships, budgeting, and work-study programs, student loans can be useful and manageable financial resources. For some students, student loans are the only way they can further their education and achieve their desired career. For those individuals, temporary debt is worth a college degree.



for college. "Apply for at least twenty," suggests Littrell, but work-study programs can also aid in keeping student-loan use to a minimum. Students can apply for work-study through FAFSA, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. With work-study, students can earn money with a part-time job, so they can contribute to financing their education.

"I think working in college can be very beneficial if you are able to come up with a schedule that allows you to grow and succeed as a student, as well as making money," says Littrell. Working can help pay for living expenses, as well as any unexpected expenses that arise like a car breaking down, travel opportunities, or even extra school supplies.

Another strategy when it comes to avoiding unnecessary debt in college is budgeting. Knowing the loan interest rate is a vital factor to consider when using student loans for financing. "Remember to borrow smart and to be aware of your debt amount, interest accrued, and your loan limits," says Alisha Danner, a financial aid advisor at Grayson College. Students should be aware of their financial limits and repayment plans.

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## Free Textbooks

Many classes in biology, sociology, government, economics, and all history classes here at Grayson College have free and open textbooks. "Open" here means that the teachers have the freedom to remix, revise and re-use parts of the book to adapt it for Grayson College students. Revising, remixing and improving content becomes especially important in our recent shift to 8-week terms.

*Did I mention that OER textbooks are free?*

OER's first came to Grayson College in 2013 when biology professor and Grayson College OER pioneer Dr. Mike Keck initiated the transition of the biology department toward OER use. Biology professor and Grayson College OER pioneer Patrice Parsons has also been using OER's in her Biology courses for 5 years. This fall the biology department has begun using OER's in Anatomy and Physiology courses as well. Parsons says the students feel "a profound sense of relief when they realize the textbook is free."

Dr. Parsons is also encouraged by the change in business models that increasing OER use is forcing on the traditional textbook publishing model. She says the industry "can no longer be so complacent and profit from their monopolization of information." From the teacher perspective, Parsons emphasizes that "the fact that I can tell my students they are receiving a high-quality textbook for FREE is a tremendous feeling."

Another Grayson College OER pioneer is sociology professor Sherri Cooke, who has been using OpenStax from Rice University for 2 over years. She says that while students do "love the fact the that the ebook is free, those who want a hard copy can still buy one at the bookstore and then sell it back at the end of the term." Dr. Cooke also likes OpenStax because it provides test banks, and it allows her to modify and edit the content to fit her student's needs.

OER's can significantly help the Grayson College student body, which faces two significant challenges. First, over 50% of our students qualify as

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## Financial Aid Eligibility

2. If a student reaches Maximum Time Frame they will be placed on financial aid suspension. Maximum Time Frame is when a student reaches the maximum amount of hours allowed for a major. For example if a student is pursuing a 60-hour degree, they are given 90 hours to complete the degree. If a student's attempted hours reach the maximum hours allowed, the student is then placed on suspension and will remain in that status unless the student files an appeal and it is approved.

**Appeals**

A student who has been placed on suspension does have the option to file an appeal. To file an appeal, a student will need to have mitigating circumstances. A mitigating circumstance is something that was out of your control that hindered you from successfully completing your classes and meeting SAP requirements. This could be something such as a death of a family member, an illness, or hospitalization of yourself or a family member.

**Requirements to file an appeal are:**

1. Complete Appeal form
2. Type statement to the committee explaining what mitigating circumstances happened and how it has changed now.
3. Supply supporting documents for the mitigating circumstances that were used in your statement to the committee.
4. A degree audit for the degree that you are pursuing that is completed with your success coach. This degree audit lets the committee know how many classes you have remaining towards your degree of choice and any other relevant information they may need to add.
5. Provide an acceptance letter for the program that you are entering into, if an acceptance is required for that program.

Once a completed appeal has been submitted to the Financial Aid Office, the appeals committee has up to 45 days to make their decision. After a decision has been made, the student will receive a notification on their My Viking under their Document Tracking tab, and a letter will be mailed to them.

low income. Secondly, we have many non-traditional students who need personalized learning methods. Thus, the cost and rigid structures of traditional educational resources can sometimes be barriers to success. The Open Education movement can be a vital tool in promoting student success at Grayson College.

In Texas with the passage of Senate Bill 810, state law now requires OER's to be designated in college course schedules. Even as the passage of SB810 was encouraging, Grayson College had already established an active OER committee that had helped twelve classes move toward the use of OER's and Open Educational Practices (OEP's). The committee continues to give workshops designed to educate our faculty and professional staff on what OER's are and how to use them.

Grayson College has a committed core of administrators, faculty, staff and students who see the collaborative and active learning potential inherent in Open Educational Practices and who are excited about the global OER movement. Aside from expanding OER and OEP, our OER committee is seeking ways to make OER and OEP use sustainable. The opportunity to lower student costs and create programs that reflect the Grayson College personalized learning model has created energy across campus. OER's and OEP's are a means to open the roads for student success. The exchange of ideas, methods and strategies inherent to the Open Education movement can help Grayson College personalize learning toward more successful classrooms and more successful students.



Look for this Creative Commons open license BY symbol which identifies OER's

**Academic Plan**

If an appeal has been approved, the student's financial aid status will be changed from suspension to academic plan. This means the student is now eligible for financial aid again as long as they meet the terms of their appeal. The terms are explained in the appeal approval letter that is mailed to the student.

A student on an academic plan for GPA and/or Pace will remain on their plan every semester they meet their terms until they either bring their GPA and Pace back to the required minimums and are then placed back in good standing or complete the degree that they filed the appeal for.

A student who is on academic plan for Maximum Time Frame will remain on a plan every semester they meet their terms until they complete the degree that they filed the appeal for.

*If you want to know if you are meeting Satisfactory Academic Progress, stop by the Financial Aid Office, call us at (903)463-8794, or email us at [financialaid@grayson.edu](mailto:financialaid@grayson.edu).*



(L-R): Alisha Danner & Wayne Ryon, two of our advisors that can help you find out your eligibility

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# Biomedical Engineering

His hope is that one day those insights may help lead to treatments. Since then, Smith has worked as an associate professor at Yale University and Case Western Reserve University, coaching a team of biomedical engineering students who researched nanoparticles that could stop internal bleeding, among other biomedical research areas.



Professor Jennifer Dearolf teaches biomedical engineering courses at Hendrix College

complete a BME degree. At Hendrix and schools around the country, undergraduate program enrollment in biomedical engineering is rapidly increasing with the number of jobs in this field. The undergraduate programs provide students with integrated and rigorous training in engineering, mathematics and basic sciences.

Smith's everyday research-oriented routine is rather different from the more application-based one of Dr. Jeannie Hatt, a pediatric doctor practicing in Denison, Texas. Although their routines are different, Dr. Hatt still has seen the impact that biomedical engineers have had in her work environment. "BME's not only make improvements on current technologies for treating patients, but they are providing us doctors with advancements for interpreting diagnostic values in new ways. Overall, they are changing the efficiency and effectiveness that we use to treat patients," she stated.

Jennifer Dearolf is a biology professor at Hendrix College in Conway, Arkansas and teaches many of the courses necessary to

BME incorporates a strong interdisciplinary component that combines the quantitative aspects of engineering analysis and design with a range of biology and physiology, from the molecular and cellular levels to entire systems and organisms.

Since BME is such a broad field of study, there are many different disciplines.

Dearolf explained, "A strong BME program will provide students with the skills necessary to work as engineers, as well as provide physiological and biological foundations that are not included in more traditional engineering programs." Required courses necessary to become a biomedical engineer include advanced math courses, biology, biochemistry, engineering, biomedical measurements, and more classes geared towards the specific discipline of biomedical engineering.

According to Professor Dearolf, one can land entry-level jobs with a bachelor's degree. Biomedical engineers typically need a bachelor's degree in biomedical engineering or bioengineering or in a related engineering field. However, some research or supervisory positions may require a graduate degree.

The average amount of inflation in the number of jobs in BME is pictured. The job's popularity is currently in an inflationary period due to the increased need for improvements on medical devices, and overall patient care according to "Biomedical Engineers Occupations."

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average annual salary for a biomedical engineer is \$88,040. Compared to the other engineering fields, BME is a financially rewarding field to study. For instance, electrical is at an annual salary of \$81,528, mechanical at \$81,680, and chemical at \$86,447 according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) article "Biomedical Engineers."

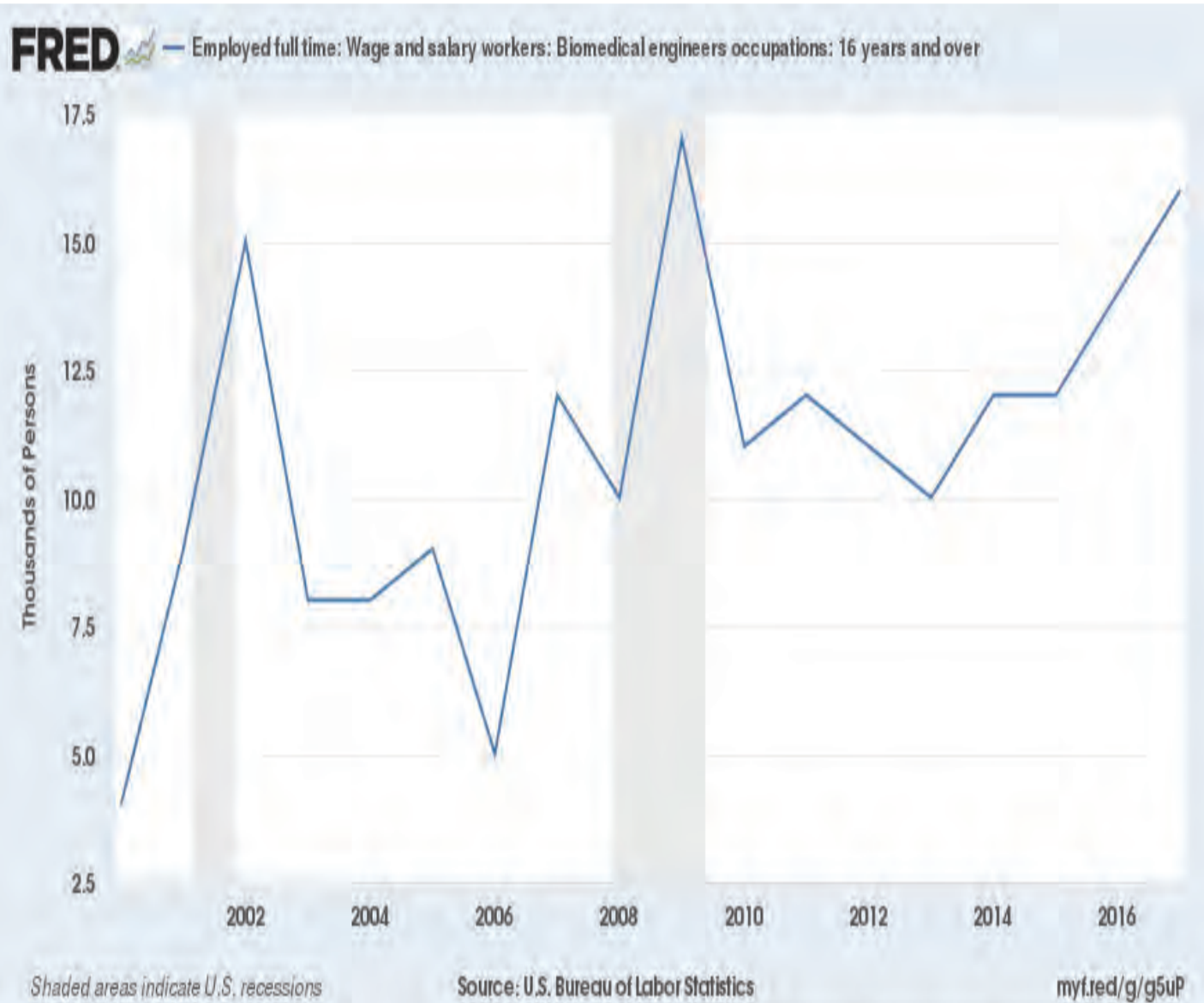


Dr. Jeannie Hatt uses biomedical engineer technology in her practice

Also, according to the BLS, "Employment of biomedical engineers is projected to grow seven percent from 2016 to 2026; about as fast as the average for all occupations. Increasing numbers of technologies and applications to medical equipment and devices, along with the medical needs of a growing aging population, will require the services of biomedical engineers." Approximately 20,890 biomedical engineers were employed in the United States in 2015, and most of these professionals worked in the areas of medical manufacturing, pharmaceutical and medicine development and in research.

The BLS predicted that the biomedical engineering field would grow about 23% between 2014 and 2024. While employment in many engineering fields might slow down, biomedical engineers would have increased job growth due to the constant need for improving medical technologies and practices. This will not only increase the pay of biomedical engineers, but also decrease other engineering professions due to the increasing demand.

Shaded areas indicate U.S. recessions



## Prospects in Pharmacy

By Kanon Keeler, Student

Kanon Keeler and Jose Rocha are two high school seniors at Gunter High participating in a brand-new course with hopes of landing a job in pharmacy after high school.

Gunter High School is a small 3A school located along Highway 289 between Sherman and Celina. With the recent growth in school funding due to the rise in student population, Gunter has recently gained a health-science-centered program with multiple courses. Among those offered is the newly introduced Pharmacy curriculum. In the course students learn about the career of Pharmacy Technicians with the goal of becoming certified as one.

Gunter High School gained the health science program in 2015, when Jeannie Clarke RN, and BSN, joined the high school to create the practicum. With three years of growth in the department, Clarke hopes to increase the available courses for the students, Pharmacology being the most recent expansion. Clarke introduced the new addition in hopes of exposing students to the different possibilities of health science careers.

More specifically, she introduced Pharmacology to help students who need a job through college or those who are not planning on attending college and wish to enter the workforce after graduation. Furthermore, Clarke adds that she would like to introduce multiple certification programs for students such as EMT Basic or Nurse's Aide, given that the school can partner with Grayson College or Collin College. Clarke emphasizes that these courses will not be easy, so students should prepare to put a great deal of effort toward the practicum. The course that Rocha and Keeler are participat-

ing in is unique to Gunter High. Not only is this course a new addition to the high school's roster, but Rocha and Keeler are the only two high school seniors who accepted the challenge to participate out of their class of seventy-eight students. It should be noted that the program originally had eleven students but nine dropped the course upon learning the class was two periods at the end of the school day. Keeler and Rocha entered the class determined to finish, the possible job prospect being too valuable to them.

According to Rocha, the reason he is dedicated to the class is his loving mother, "I joined the class to follow in my mother's footsteps. She's my role model... My goal is to become as good as she is in her job..." Rocha remarks feelingly. Rocha's mother has worked as a pharmacy technician for a couple years now for The Medicine Shoppe in Sherman, Texas.

As for Keeler, the reason he desires to become a pharmacy technician is to have a well-paying, steady job throughout college. He plans on studying Pharmacy to become a pharmacist, so the course is the perfect opportunity for hands-on experience in the field.

The class is operated through an online curriculum that offers the students work on their own time. It is overseen by Clarke to ensure the students maintain good progress. As for their individual schedules, Rocha goes to clinical at The Medicine Shoppe on Mondays and Wednesdays and stays in class Tuesdays and Thursdays to work on the online practicum. Keeler goes to clinical Tuesdays and Thursdays then works online Mondays and Wednesdays.

### The Career as a Whole

Pharmacy Technicians, often referred to as pharm-techs, are the workers under the pharmacists who perform most of the necessary tasks to keep a pharmacy working. Pharm-techs are essentially the muscles, bones, and heart of the pharmacy. This job is vital to the medical community as pharmacy technicians perform the largest portion of work in pharmaceuticals. In the words of Aubrie Li, Pharmacy Manager for the Medicine Shoppe in Sherman, "[Pharm-techs are] an assistant to a pharmacist, like a nurse to a doctor."

In order to become a pharmacy technician in Texas, one must complete a state-certified guided-learning program whether that is a class offered by a college or an online program.

From there, aspiring pharm-techs must take the state's approved pharmacy technician certification exam. There is no additional need to become a certified pharmacy-technician-in-training, but in the course that Keeler and Rocha are taking, Clarke found that it would be best to ensure they have the additional time shadowing in the pharmacy. On average, the two spend an extra four hours a week shadowing pharmacy technicians at The Medicine Shoppe.

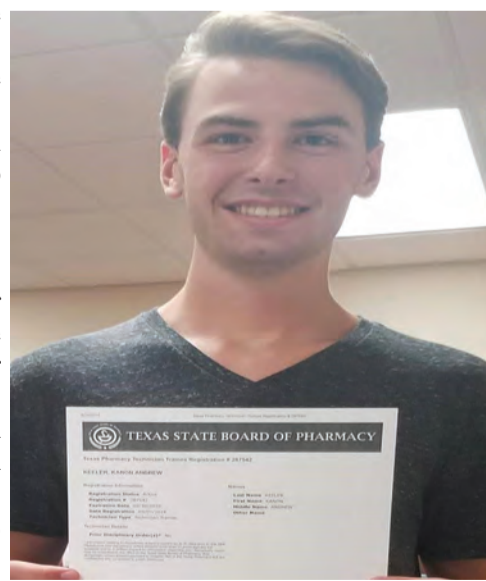
As analyzed by The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), pharmacy technicians earn approximately \$31,750 a year or \$15.26 an hour on average. In terms of job outlook, the career is on the rise, with a 12% increase projected for the 2016 to 2026 job market.

Typically, a pharm-tech can expect to work an average of 40 to 50 hours a week, depending on job location. In addition, pharmacists may be open all hours of the night, so pharm-techs may be required to work night shifts. The job is primarily performed on the workers' feet, standing most of the day, filling prescriptions, filing drugs and other duties assigned to the worker.

For Jose and Kanon, their future is filled with limitless possibilities as both young men are striving for exciting careers while still in high school.



Jose Rocha



Kanon Keeler

## Training Routes for Future Pilots

By Melanie Loftis, Student

It's the perfect time to become a pilot. With the ever-increasing demand for air transport, combined with the decreasing supply of able pilots, the world needs airmen and women more than ever. But how does a person filled with the love of flying figure out how to train in a way that is best tailored to their personal needs and desires? Luckily, there are three unique routes through which prospective pilots may choose to satisfy those needs: an accredited university, the military, or a local airport.

*From University to Major Airline*

The airlines are desperate for pilots as an increasing number of captains retire from their jobs. Due to this growing pilot shortage, many accredited universities such as Kansas State University and Purdue University have placed an increasing emphasis on professional flight programs. These classes are specifically designed for students to become commercial pilots after only four or five years of training.



American Airlines Pilot David Brayer

David Brayer, Kansas State graduate and American Airlines first officer, began his journey as a pilot through such a program. Several factors contributed to his decision: one is that a university program allows students to fly multiple times a week on a set schedule while also completing a bachelor's degree—which is a requirement for all major airlines. “It's a one-stop shop,” Brayer says, “... [with a] degree, flight training, and a guaranteed pool of flight students.”

For many prospective pilots, the combination of these three benefits makes a college degree in professional flight quite attractive. Furthermore, attending an accredited university reduces the required minimum flight hours from 1,500 to 1,000. This alone shortens the time until pilots are eligible for hire (via major or legacy airlines) by up to one and a half years.

College programs are notoriously expensive

compared to a local airport or the military, however. “It's impossible to graduate without debt,” Brayer says. Therefore, those who desire to attend college to become a pilot must be aware of how to finance and budget for their four or five years in school. It is also crucial for prospective pilots to visit different universities and weigh the pros and cons of each one before making a financial commitment that they might end up regretting.



Airport landing strip

*Local Airport*

Despite the numerous benefits that come with enrolling in a university program, those who do not necessarily have the money or would prefer a more relaxed learning environment may favor training through a local airport. This route is especially beneficial for those who desire to simply become private pilots as a hobby or to fly for small charter companies that do not require 1,500 hours and a bachelor's degree. “It's definitely a cheaper route, [and] very easy to get hours,” notes Jeffery Smith, a private pilot from Addison, Texas.

Prospective pilots can receive all of the same certificates and ratings that they would through an accredited university, but for thousands of dollars less occasionally. The program is also self-paced, meaning that students may choose any time that works best with their schedules. So, if they have to cancel a flight, there are no grades or scholarships on the line.

However, Smith also warns that “[Students] really have to ‘shop’ for flight schools.” Unlike universities, which are already credible and well-known for certain programs, it can be difficult to find a local flight school that best suits the needs of a prospective pilot. For example, one airport might be relatively cheap to attend at face-value, but its aircraft might be poorly maintained and dangerous to fly. Or perhaps that same airport might be low on available flight instructors, making it stressful and tedious to find time slots for training, cautions Smith. Still, when students do find the airport program that suits them, there are several advantages awaiting.

*Air Force and Student Pilots*

A third way to achieve quality training is through the military, particularly the Air Force. The Air

Force is well known for exceptionally high-tech training methods and “high-quality people,” as Hayden Peck, retired Air Force Captain and commercial pilot, proudly claims. Prospective pilots who desire to serve their country and join a team of skilled and disciplined comrades are likely to find the military to be the best option for flight training. Regarding expenses, the military is by far the cheapest option, as the government pays for virtually all of a student's training and equipment.

“The Air Force [also] offers the best...classes, simulators, and advanced jets,” Peck says. Prospective pilots are therefore guaranteed quality education in their field. Students may join the Air Force via college AFROTC (Air Force Reserve Officers' Training Corps) while completing a separate bachelor's degree, or by applying for the Air Force Academy after completing high school. To top it off, an enlisted pilot is paid around \$100,000 on average annually, with bonuses after ten years.



Airforce student training plane

However, the military is not for everyone: for pilots specifically, “[The Air Force] wants their money returned,” says Peck. Instead of that money being returned in the literal sense, it means that a pilot must sign a contract binding them to active service for at least ten years after either graduating from the Academy or AFROTC. This one fact is enough to compel any student to seriously consider whether the military life is the right choice for them. Furthermore, pilots are often deployed overseas for months at a time, making the ability to have a family and close friends difficult. “You must truly love to fly,” Peck emphasizes.

*Choosing the Right Path*

Each of the previously mentioned pilot training routes are completely different from one another, meaning there is an option that caters to any person with a passion for flight. There are general “pros and cons” for all three, but each can give a student the best training designed for their particular needs and desires.

## Flightless

By Melanie Loftis, Student

When she dreams of flight  
She cannot fly.  
When she leaps for the sky  
A weight pulls her down in spite.

It is an idiosyncrasy,  
One of several.  
Or perhaps it is just a guilt  
She will never absolve herself of.

It is a stigmatization she has  
placed upon herself,  
For why fly free undeserved?  
So the wish is always pilfered  
By something self-imposed.

Not a modicum of flight occurs,  
For there is too much weight.  
Nothing more than a leap across  
the sand,  
For there is too much to be done  
on land.

## Having a Coachable Homelife

By Kenleigh Stevens, Student

“You don't get any vacations. You don't get to have a lot of social/family life. It takes a lot of dedication and work, but I wouldn't have it any other way,” says Lisa Davis, head volleyball and tennis coach at Leonard High School (LHS), speaking of her job. Coaches are dedicated and commit all their time year-round to the program they coach. Time is important for every professional, but it is more limited for coaches.

Coaches impact the lives of many children in their lifetime, but the sacrifices a coach makes for their team and players takes away a very large piece of a coaches' life. Their job takes away time with their own children. It takes away social time with friends and family, and not to mention, coaching is just an exhausting job in general. Coaches sacrifice to ensure they have a team that's kind hearted, well mannered, and well taken care of.

On an average, high school coaches spend sixty plus hours at the school or at a school event during the week, according to coaches at LHS. This means that coaches spend a third of their week at a school function or school event. Coaches like James Fielden, assistant football coach and calculus teacher at LHS, spend ninety plus hours a week at the school or at a school function. The football program at LHS holds practice Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday for an average of four hours a day.

They have football games on Thursday and Friday of every week in the fall, as well as film-watching practice and actual practice on Saturday and Sunday. This means that Fielden is at the school every day of the week for not just teaching but a lot of football-related activities. And as if Fielden didn't have enough time taken away from family and friends, his wife is also a coach at LHS.

Sarah Fielden, assistant volleyball coach and physical education teacher, also has a very busy schedule during the football time season, only hers is mostly focused on volleyball.

Sarah spends time in a gym for volleyball almost forty hours a week alone, not including her hours teaching and conferencing with parents. This means that a total amount of time in a week that Sarah and James Fielden get to see each other is less than twenty hours. “It is very hard, but we

make it work to the best of our ability,” states Sarah when discussing the amount of time she and her spouse get to see each other.

For coaches like the Fieldens, it is hard to find time for each other, but they get to cheer for the same team and focus on helping the same group of students from the same small town succeed athletically and academically. But for coaches like Davis, it is hard to find family time, considering her husband works a forty hour a week job, and they live in Van Alstyne, Texas. This requires Davis to drive forty-five minutes to work at LHS and back home a day, on top of working a sixty-plus-hour week at the school.

Davis' time with her husband is limited. The only



LHS Coaches James and Sarah Fielden

day they get to be with each other for certain is Sunday, when they attend church and then have a quiet day at home to themselves. With all their own children being gone to college and out of the house, it makes it a little easier because they do not have to attend to their children every day, so they can focus on their own relationship.

“It was definitely easier to wake up in the morning with kids in the house but having them gone makes it easier to work so far away and be gone so much,” says Davis. She and her husband get about two hours a night with each other and all-day Sunday, making their time together crucial.

The time for all coaches is limited when it comes to their homelife. Most coaches state that their

friends are their co-coaches, just because they spend so much time with them, and they are with them almost “24/7.” Being a coach with a family at home can be hard to deal with. They basically spend time with other kids instead of their own, which can be hard on their children. The Fieldens have a young son, but they also have two children in high school who don't live with them.

“It is tough on Nolan [five years old], especially during football/volleyball season because we are both so busy. He doesn't get to go home and just be a kid and play with his toys,” Fielden states. The support from Sarah's parents is what gets them through on volleyball game days. Tuesdays and Fridays, her mother picks Nolan up from school and babysits him at the Fieldens' house until they both get home. And for weekend tournaments and practices, she takes care of him at her home in Commerce.

The time spent with Nolan is a struggle for the Fieldens. But the real struggle is with their oldest children, Keaton and Tyson, who cheer and play football for Celeste High School. With both coaches having games on Fridays, they do not get to attend these Friday-night extracurriculars of Keaton and Tyson. “I've never gotten to see my son play varsity football on Friday nights, and that's so tough to deal with for him and me,” Fielden says. But the Leonard coaches know about the struggle of the Fieldens, so they do everything they can to make their responsibilities easier for them.

For example, Keaton's senior night is the same night as Leonard's, so the football coaches in Leonard are going to cover for the Fieldens till they get back from Keaton's senior night. Without the help and understanding from friends and family, the coaching life would be even harder to manage.

With all the struggles and hardships of the coaching life, James and Sarah Fielden wouldn't want anything to change. High school coaches do what they do for the athletes and for the love of the game. They do not get paid a lot, and their social time is tremendously affected by their job. Davis states, “I love what I do, and I cannot see myself doing anything else.”

## Handling Unreasonable People

By Dana Kermanian, Professor

The other day, I was driving and the song “Wanna Be Startin’ Somethin,’” by Michael Jackson came on the radio. As I was listening, the wisdom in the lyrics resonated with me. There are people out there who are always trying to stir up trouble, create drama, and thrive on conflict. I think when you prefer harmony, it is easy to assume that everyone else does too. After all, when peace is the chief goal, then you have all of the lovely byproducts such as reasoning, compromise, and mutual understanding.

However, one thing that has always bewildered me is that there are people who would rather stir up conflict than be at peace. In any kind of relationship, conflict is unavoidable. However, what do we do when we encounter people who want to make war with you? What choices do we have?

Our first choice may be to assume that they actually want peace, but they simply do not know how. Never mind their bad reputation or string of broken relationships as red flags. Perhaps, they do not know how glorious it could be to find a mutually beneficial solution. Maybe they have not met you, the chief peacekeeper.

With this approach you will quickly find that your opponent is impervious to reason and logic. You will find that they have an allergic reaction to empathy, compromise and understanding. Then, if you keep assuming they would want peace if they could just revel in the glory of a “win-win” situation, you will keep being disappointed. Eventually, they will wear you down, and you will recognize that the only way to get through to them is to sink to their level. BAM! Then they have you right where they want you.

The second choice is you decide to go to war. King Solomon advises in Proverbs 20:18, “Plans are established by counsel: by wise guidance wage war.” Therefore, you gather your counsel and prepare yourself for war. If they cannot learn the easy way, then it is up to you to teach them the hard way. Either way, they will learn!

In fact, it may be easy to think a war would be winnable because people who stir up conflict have loads of enemies. Yet, there are two important reasons not to choose this option. First, in any war, there is always fallout. Sure you may actually win the war, but at what cost? Secondly, strife makers

hang around other strife makers.

It is difficult enough to deal with one unreasonable person, but just imagine, now you are dealing with a whole group of people who thrive on keeping the conflict going. Again, they have you right where they want you.

The last choice is that you recognize exactly whom you are dealing with, and you give them the exact opposite of what they want. The King of Pop warned us that they always “Wanna Be Startin’ Somethin.” What is the opposite of something? Nothing. King Solomon, the wisest man to ever live, expertly advised us in Proverbs 26:20, “For lack of wood the fire goes out, and where there is no whisperer, quarreling ceases.”

When we try to make strife-makers love peace, when we utilize their tactics or even when we choose to engage the conflict willingly, all of those choices are adding wood to the fire. Instead, we must separate from the conflict and give people who want trouble nothing that they can use to keep the conflict going. Only then, will they have no choice but to seek trouble elsewhere.

## A-kon: A Fort Worth Annual Extravaganza

By Emily Loftis, Student

Next year in early June, fans of anime and video games from the region and countries all over the world will converge in the heart of Fort Worth, Texas for the 30th annual anime convention, A-kon. This massive, four-day event offers a wide array of activities spread across four hotels with the Fort Worth Convention Center as the central hub. Initially hosting less than 400 attendees, today this extravaganza hosts a staggering 100,000+ attendees of all ages eager for a glimpse at thousands of cosplayers ready to show off their creations.

Costume Play or ‘cosplay’ as its commonly referred to, is the practice enjoyed by millions of people around the world who dress up as characters from their favorite shows, movies, video games, etc. all year long as opposed to only Halloween. Unlike dressing up for Halloween, cosplayers spend anywhere from a few hundred dollars on a costume to several thousand on materials alone to make their looks stand out at conventions.

The standard cosplay costume usually includes a wig, the character’s costume and shoes, and a prop that perhaps the character holds such as a weapon. In the 1970’s, Star Wars and Star Trek were the only two movies that enthusiasts would cosplay. Nearly sixty years later categories would balloon in size to thousands of shows and movies for cosplayers to choose from. Naruto, Homestuck, Marvel, Voltron, Final Fantasy, and Overwatch are some of the most popular cosplay fandoms most commonly seen at A-kon.

Aware of the thousands of talented cosplayers who attend their convention every year, A-kon producers take great care to ensure that every cosplayer’s experience is worthwhile. Because these cosplayers spend so much time and effort perfecting their cosplays, A-kon offers several competitions to show off their work off to a panel of international cosplayers and thousands of fans.

“The largest cosplay competition is the ‘Main Stage Walk-On Contest,’” Kaitlyn Winlow, a local cosplayer who recently graduated from Gunter High School, remarks. Kaitlyn has been attending and competing in this event for the past four years at A-kon and won the Most Creative Costume Award last year.

“The walk-on competition is very competitive,” Kaitlyn says, “Every part of the costume must be

100% handmade and has to go through several stages before entering the competition.” Every costume entered must have documentation and pictures submitted to verify the developing process of the work gone into creating the costume.

Set up like as a fashion show, the Walk-On competition showcases individual cosplayers who strut down the catwalk striking three poses for the fans below them as well as the judges’ panel on the right. Stage presence and quality of costumes are, “...key in making a good impression on the judges,” Kaitlyn claims.

Kaitlyn loves attending the competition despite the intense pressure she and many other cosplayers experience. Her favorite part is hanging out backstage waiting for her turn on the catwalk with other cosplayers. She loves the positive, light-hearted energy shared between other passionate competitors who love the hobby as much as she does.

A-kon offers more than competitions for event-goers including multiple photoshoot sites perfect for individual and group photos. The saying, “Everything is bigger in Texas” proves accurate when talking about the sheer number of places photoshoots can be held at the convention site. The Water Gardens are the most popular.

Cosplayers, intending to compete or attending for pleasure, will be approached by fans for pictures. Jessica Smith, another local cosplayer from Gunter High School, who has gone to A-kon for the past three years as a non-competitive cosplayer, states she “loves being approached by fans.” She says it is “...gratifying to see my creations bring joy to the faces of fans who believe that I embody the character the way they imagine them to be in real life.” Since most of these characters have heavy influences on fans personally, she doesn’t mind striking any pose, as ridiculous as they may look, in order to please them.

Jessica’s friend, another non-competitive cosplayer who has attended A-kon the past three years, Anna Busch, is also comfortable posing for eager fans wanting to get a snapshot of her cosplays. While she is a little more reserved than Jessica, she values her “alone time” at conventions just as much as she does in the comfort of her own home. So, whenever lunchtime rolls around, pictures for her are off-limits. However, that doesn’t



Kaitlyn Winslow award winning Walk-On Competition Costume

keep her from her fans for very long for she likes to make them smile as much as Jessica does. “Making my fans smile makes me smile,” she notes. “Being able to bring happiness to others is one of the best rewards I receive from cosplaying at A-kon.”

So, if you are a cosplayer or a fan of anime and videogames, there is something for everyone at A-kon. If you’re wanting to immerse yourself amongst thousands of like-minded individuals gathered to celebrate one of the largest anime conventions in North America, A-kon is guaranteed not to disappoint.

## The Complete Works of Shakespeare Play

By Jason Todd, Staff Writer

November 2nd and 3rd was a great opportunity to see the entire works of William Shakespeare abridged and revised by Adam Long, Daniel Singer, and Jess Winfield. The play was a spectacular show for anyone who had the opportunity to be a part of the audience. Of course this play can be found on the internet and is watched on televisions, phones, tablets, and many other electronic devices. However, I do urge you to not just watch this play, but to experience it. Be a part of the audience when the play is being reenacted in person. This way you can follow the actors in emotion and spirit.

The actors had enthusiasm and heart that pulls you into believing that the play is a reality. This was an amazing opportunity to be a part of something even if it were just for ninety minutes. I went to go see them in action on Saturday for their 1 p.m. performance. The roller coaster of emotion that they took me on and the laughs I shared with so many people sitting next to me created one of the best experiences in my life. The chance to be a part of a group that shared my same passion and enthusiasm for plays was fantastic.

I saw another reenactment of this play in 2012, *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare Abridged* by Adam Long, Daniel Singer and Jess Winfield. The show was just as phenomenal. The jokes were mostly the same but with a few approved revisions. This play is always growing to fit the era of society that we live in. The differences

that I saw in the play of 2012 and the play of 2018 were the name drops. Frank Sinatra was one of the references used in the 2012 reenactment. Even though most watchers might get the reference and know who was mentioned, the playwrights for the Grayson version thought it was time for an update in the joke. So Frank Sinatra was replaced with Lady Gaga. Lady Gaga’s name being thrown at the audience was unexpected and hilariously well done. The playwrights really did their homework on keeping up with today’s events.

With all of that being said, there were some minor problems with the play. For instance, during the play, the actors were doing a rap following the same beat as the “We Will Rock You” song done by Queen. During this performance, when the actors would stomp their feet to the beat of the song, their voices weren’t being projected loudly enough for the audience to hear. I was seated in the very back row, so hearing two of the three actors was a little disappointing.

Another problem I saw during the play was when the actors were consumed by their roles and took them a little too far. Part of the play was to interact with the audience by throwing up. I felt that the actor had broken the fourth wall by showing one of the audience members a little too much attention during this portion of the play. These mistakes were very petite in comparison to their wonderful performance on stage.

Director Alison Trapp had a few words to say about the production; “A play is never perfect. Everyone is always striving to be better when they are performing.” This is a good point to make. Plays are meant to be enjoyed by the audience, and unlike movies, plays cannot be perfected. It’s the mistakes that make the plays memorable for the audience.

I know I will always remember this play. Ben Beyerlin was a natural at portraying his character Hamlet, and he enjoyed the production of the play. Beyerlin also enjoyed being in a play that brought laughs to its audience. His scene where he cries because people in the audience were laughing during his “To be or not to be” speech was just fantastic and well done.

Aaron Jobe, another one of the three actors, enjoyed changing roles throughout the play. He did this very well. To juggle four or five different characters during one production is challenging, but Jobe was splendid at this feat. Koby Sharp, the last of the three actors, had a great performance in portraying his character play Ophelia. Another one of his characters, Claudius in the play of *Hamlet*, was a good highlight of his performance. He loved interacting with the audience as Claudius during the play. The audience was very fond of Sharp’s performance as well. I, a fellow student, and the theatre lover, am eager to see another play done by the Grayson theater department.

# Part-Time Jobs for Students: A Hurt or a Help?

By Kaylee Mitchell, Student

At Leonard High School (LHS), located in the rural town of Leonard, Texas, many students are starting their ascent into adulthood by taking on a part-time job. Kinley Speir, a senior at LHS and valedictorian of her class, works at the Leonard Family Pharmacy. She says she believes her job will offer her an advantage in experience as she enters her career after graduation. But despite possibly having benefits for students, jobs can also pose a challenge to balance with schoolwork and extracurriculars. Ultimately, will these part-time jobs help or hurt students during high school?

At LHS, a large group of students are taking both honors classes at their high school and dual-credit classes at Grayson College. These students strive to receive the best education possible by committing to more rigorous and time-consuming courses than their peers. The advanced curriculum means more homework and harder tests that require lengthy studying.

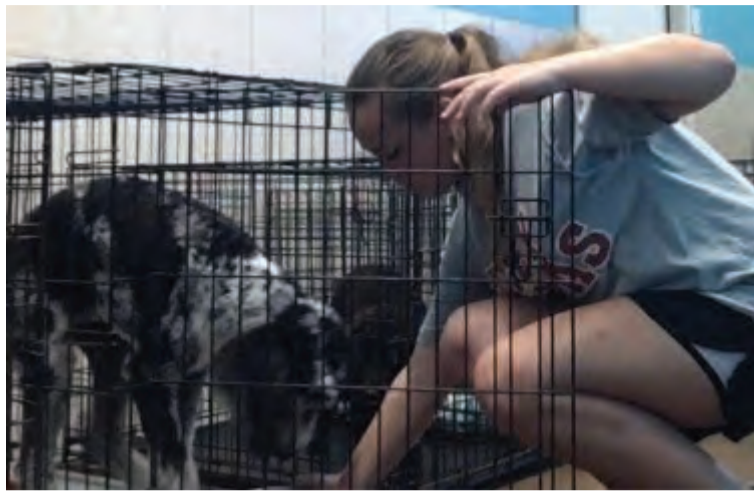
Managing the burden of dual-credit classes can be emotionally and mentally exhausting for students. Jessi Smoot, a senior at LHS, says, "I cry from stress, and I'm constantly worried about getting things done." It requires a strong motivation to manage multiple responsibilities at once. Speir explains that it is hard to balance her personal life with maintaining high grades at school.

Not only do these students put in the effort to achieve in education, but they also add more responsibilities by choosing to work part-time jobs. Speir, who also takes a difficult Calculus AP class and will graduate in 2019 with twenty-four hours of college credit, has already worked three jobs throughout her high school career.

She has worked as a dance teacher assistant, started teaching at her own dance studio, and presently works at the Leonard Pharmacy. Smoot not only takes dual-credit and agriculture classes but is also in the process of earning volunteer veteri-

narian hours while working physically strenuous late shifts at Cordial Canine Kennel.

Adding to an already-stressful school life, having a part-time job can make balancing aspects of a personal life especially difficult for these students. Smoot says that her long work hours barely give her time to do homework or study. Her job also causes her to lose out on time for herself and family because she works so late. "...When I get home, I'm too tired to do anything," she expresses. Taking personal time to rest and recharge after



Jessi Smoot works long hours taking care of numerous animals at Cordial Canine Kennel

a long day is, unfortunately, not always an option for students who work.

Speir explains that she does not have any down time because she must start homework and studying as soon as she gets home around six o'clock. Losing free time and proper sleep are serious problems for these young adults. Kacie Littrell, a former English teacher and now counselor at LHS, recalls what it was like when she worked as a server at Lea's Restaurant during high school, "Some nights it was crazy late, I was super tired, and it was hard." She adds that taking dual-credit courses in addition made life much more difficult.

Despite the disadvantages, there are some positive aspects of taking on a job while in high school. Depending on the student and the job, it can be an excellent way to learn responsibility and gain experience. From her perspective as a school counselor, Littrell explains that although possibly adding a lot of stress and worry, having a job also gives students a greater feeling of accomplishment. Balancing work with school also improves students' abilities to set goals and multitask. Littrell describes what she gained from working throughout her high school years: "It forced me to work on my time management and to take advantage of time I had off."

Along with developing skills, there are other important reasons why students choose to take on part-time jobs. Smoot says, "I really needed money." Her parents would help her pay for college only if she got a job now. Apart from pressure from parents, some students are offered a job and do not want to turn down an opportunity. Speir says her current job was offered to her specifically.

"The job chose me," she says. In addition, some young adults feel a responsibility to work. About one of her previous jobs, Speir explains, "I started teaching dance because I felt like I needed to do something for the community."

These high school students show a maturity in their desire to earn college tuition and make a difference in their community. Each student also possesses an ability to adapt to stressful changes when taking on both advanced classes and a job. Although far from easy and not always the right choice for some students, entering the workforce early can offer an advantage in experience later when starting a career.

Littrell expresses her thoughts as a counselor on the issue, "I think it [working while in high school] adds more stress but is a really good preparation for students who pursue college and the workforce."

## Getting to the Root of Students' Anxiety

By Preslie Watson, Student

Kinley Speir, senior at Leonard High School, has dealt with anxiety for almost the entirety of her life. She exclaimed, "It hinders me in lots of ways, but it has made me push myself, and now I have maintained being number one in our class all four years of high school." Anxiety is a subject that is being talked about more often, and rightfully so since, according to the article "Anxiety Effects on Society Statistics," over 18% of the population struggles with an anxiety disorder.

This problem is something that needs to become more apparent, especially in high school and college students. Teachers, as well as other students, should learn how to properly help someone in this situation, especially when the younger part of the population has been struck with crippling anxiety.

Dealing with anxiety in high school is something that is not uncommon today as young men and women are held to high standards in all aspects of life, starting at a young age. They are being judged by their peers, their elders, and their educators constantly. This stress can cause severe anxiety at a young age, but young men and women handle this pressure in completely different ways.

"Boys hide their emotions and put on a 'tough guy' act [while] girls tend to be more emotional and expressive with their feelings," said Mike Williamson, a U.S. history teacher at Leonard High School for over twenty years. Young men feel the need to hide how they feel because they don't want to look weak. This can sometimes cause the anxiety to be worse than that of a girl's and can propel the anxiety into depression, Williamson observed. Not talking about stress can take a toll on a student if they hold it in too long.

Kacie Littrell, guidance counselor at Leonard High School, said, "Students come to my office at least every other day that struggle with anxiety ... [and] I usually see more girls than boys. Typically, girls are more likely to talk about it than boys."

Anxiety is also a term people use loosely, Littrell remarked. A student may be dealing with high levels of stress, but that doesn't always mean that student suffers from actual anxiety. Williamson expressed, "You need to look at the source of the anxiety and see if it is serious or if a student brought on their own stress by being unprepared for class." This seems to be a reoccurring cycle: students will procrastinate or not be prepared, and it will cause them to have an anxiety attack, Williamson added.

Being unprepared and stressing about it is different from suffering from anxiety; though most

students who truly suffer from this disorder can remember moments when they knew something was wrong and knew they couldn't help but stress out over something small. Speir recalled, "Fifth grade, in Mrs. Barker's science class, I made a 'O' on a vocabulary test... I knew something was wrong when I couldn't stop freaking out... my mom even said a fifth grader shouldn't be as stressed as I was."

Anxiety on this scale is serious and can be triggered by lots of stressors. Students who struggle with anxiety have different triggers that may set them off, but as they start to pay attention and become aware of their issue, they notice what these triggers are. Speir stated, "Noises. After I've been running high on anxiety all day... specific noises can send me into a spiral." Hearing specific noises is a common trigger for students with anxiety. It could be a noise like tapping a pencil or a door squeaking, and that could be the factor that sets someone off.

Logan Watson, a twenty-five-year-old Stephen F. Austin University graduate who struggles with anxiety, noted, "Specifically, being yelled at... being put down by someone speaking in a harsh tone, not being listened to in a moment of panic... invasive questions, and large crowds" set him off. Watson has found over the years that these situations trigger his anxiety, and he is still learning to control his reaction to them.

Students need to realize that almost anything can trigger a panic attack when someone is struggling with their anxiety. Simple issues like annoying sounds and crowded places seem more significant to someone who is on edge. These triggers are difficult and take great strength to cope with. However, there are multiple coping mechanisms available and different mechanisms help different people, observed Watson.

Coping with anxiety is probably the most difficult part of the disorder. Most students struggle to face their anxiety. There are many methods for coping with anxiety, but the most common advice is to go speak to a therapist, explained Littrell. Seeing a therapist is usually beneficial to someone dealing with anxiety, but not everyone has access to a therapist.

Watson elaborated, "If you are in a moment when you know you are about to break down, my therapist taught me a coping mechanism where you identify 5 senses... you find one thing you feel and you touch it, you find one thing you can taste and you taste it, you find one thing you can

hear and you listen to it, you find one thing you can smell and you smell it, and you find one thing you can see and you focus on it." This coping mechanism helps students focus immediately on something other than their anxiety and will help calm them down faster in a moment of panic.

For some students, finding a hobby or something they enjoy will help distract them from overthinking their worries. Speir stated, "Tennis [has helped me cope]. Working out and releasing endorphins relieves stress and makes me feel less anxious."

There are many coping styles that do not require one to see a therapist, such as physically taking care of oneself, getting regular sleep, eating nourishing food, taking showers every day, trying to participate in social activities, getting out of the house and, communicating with other people. Focus on the positive aspects of one's life, rather than the negatives. Don't tell someone to "just relax" or "chill out"; soothing one's anxiety doesn't work like that. If someone around you is struggling with anxiety, mention some of these coping mechanisms or try to connect them with a therapist.

The best one can do for someone who is panicking or breaking down is to try to talk them out of their stress by reassuring them it is not as overwhelming as it seems and it is not worth stressing over. Try to teach them coping mechanisms and/or get them to a therapist. They should never bottle up information and let the anxiety increase, advised Watson. They should always discuss their issues and have someone who will listen in their time of need. He added, "Don't put [your anxiety] on the backburner. Get to the root of the problem and work from there."

Getting to the root of one's issues requires them to be able to voice their concerns, but if one is uncomfortable talking about one's problems, they could keep a journal and write down their thoughts. This way the student can go back and read what was going through their mind in that moment of high anxiety, and it may help them find a solution to the problem. Anxiety is incurable.

There is no real way to get rid of anxiety, and most people affected deal with it their whole life, noted Littrell. But we can make ourselves more aware of the issue and teach ourselves how to properly deal with this potentially disabling disorder. We need to change how we address mental health issues, and coping with anxiety is a positive starting point.

## One Teacher Can Change Everything

By Ashley Rivera, Student

Mr. Haigis is a Pre-Algebra instructor at Grayson College. Mr. Haigis has influenced me to become a better student and use all the resources the college provides for every student. Every student has a choice in college to study and try to do their best or to just do the assignments in class and not devote their full attention to their classes.

As a new student to the college world, it has been very difficult for me to adjust to school. Taking a small break from school became a five-year break from school. Being out of school for five years has been extremely tough. College is completely different from high school.

Although I currently work nights, up to 36-48 hours a week at Texas Instruments, I have begun to get the flow of college, thanks to Mr. Haigis. He doesn't know, but he has influenced me to give myself that extra push in teaching myself how to

multitask and to improve both my study skills and my first year of college.

Mr. Haigis constantly encourages every single student to visit the Math Hub, a tutoring center where trained professionals help with math problems that you cannot solve on your own or simply do not understand. My first week in college I thought would go smoothly, but my grades were not good. I had a low D in class in my second week. I felt lost and hopeless, as if deciding to enroll in college this year was a big mistake.

I was not understanding material or even wanting to help myself understand. I felt defeated. After realizing that Grayson College provides many resources to succeed, I knew I could not feel defeated if I was not trying. Mr. Haigis reminded the whole class daily, "The Math Hub will help you, and I can help you guys. Please come and ask

questions!" After constantly hearing Mr. Haigis tell the class to go to the Math Hub, I started to take his advice. As the result, I started receiving higher grades. Now I have a high B in class.

Pre-Algebra feels impossible when you absolutely despise mathematics and just do not understand, but thankfully I have a great teacher who is willing to work with me individually and help me succeed in this class. Mr. Haigis will explain anything over and over until the whole class understands exactly what he is talking about. He does not mind how many people raise their hands and ask the same question. He answers every single question with patience and kindness.

Pre-Algebra is a difficult subject, but anyone can overcome any math problem or word problem with the correct resources, motivation, attitude, and professor.

# Mission Accomplished: Challenge Coins for Worthy Achievements

By Tommy Ellis, Veteran Project Coordinator



President Jeremy McMillen (right) receives Challenge Coin Award

The Center of Excellence for Veteran Students Success (COE VSS) grant, a 3-year U. S. Department of Education program scheduled to conclude at the end of the year (December 31, 2018), was one of only thirteen colleges and universities nationwide that received special federal funding for student veteran activities. During the past three years, many milestones have been met and many missions have been accomplished that not only benefit current student veterans but will provide benefits for future GC student veterans as well.

To acknowledge the many individuals and student veterans who have worked diligently to accomplish various missions, the Grayson College Veteran Services Office has awarded almost a hundred deserving individuals with a special "challenge coin" to acknowledge their contributions and value to student veteran services.



Joanna Bryant and Rusty Weatherly receive Challenge Coin Award



Rear Admiral William A. Retz (middle) receives Challenge Coin Award

## Campus Veterans Update

Grayson College, the GC Foundation, the Luella Kemper Foundation and the Texas Workforce Commission have recently announced grant awards (over \$100,000) to serve student veterans that will allow many of the services, activities and programs currently underway in the GC Student Veterans Office to continue into the future. The Heroes Make Texoma grant will place specific emphasis on Advanced Manufacturing student veterans while developing a talent pipeline of skilled student veterans for careers in local industries. Much of the foundation for this new program has already been laid by the current COE VSS grant and its predecessor, College Credit for Heroes program. With the new funds, effective December 1, 2018, Grayson College will proudly continue its unparalleled commitment to honoring and serving local student veterans.



Kathy Hendrix receives Challenge Coin Award

**Challenge Coin:** a coin or medallion, bearing an organization's insignia or emblem, denoting success and accomplishments while signifying a strong bond between the recipients and symbolizing pride of being affiliated with an elite group.

**For More Information:** Stop by the Veteran Services Office on the 2nd Floor of the Life Center Building on the main campus. Or, call 903-415-2632 for more veterans-related information.

Memorandums of Understanding (with fifteen area partners)	Inaugural Boots to Books Military Ball (2018)	GC Student Veterans' Hub Open House
Learning Day - Student Veterans Panel	Citizen Soldier movie screening (2017)	Parades (Sherman/Denison)
Veteran Days Ceremonies/Programs/Activities (2016-2018)	Veteran Students Support Team (VSST) (12 meetings)	Bridge the Gap Program
COE VSS Collaboration Consortium (Southern Nazarene University, Eastfield College and Grayson College)	Veterans Advisory Council (VAC) (12 meetings)	Student Veterans Advisory Council (SVAC) (Est. for 2018 and beyond)
Red, White and Blue Military Awareness Training for GC Faculty/Staff (2016, 2017 and 2018)	Texoma Veterans Resources EXPOs (2016, 2017 and 2018)	Student Veteran Chaplain Service Implemented
Student Veteran Services Providers Symposiums (2017 and 2018)	Eyes of Freedom Traveling Memorial (2018)	Enhanced campus & community awareness of GC student veterans
	Afghan/Iraq Memorial for Texas (2017)	
	Student Veterans' Hub Make-Over	
	GC Student Veterans Town Forum	

# Local Veterans Take Charge of the Student Veterans Association

By Tommy Ellis, Veteran Project Coordinator

Campus leadership of the Student Veterans Association (SVA) for the 2018-19 school year has been announced. Two officers are being introduced in this issue of The Viking.

Jonah M. Scheibmeir, President: Having just completed five plus years in the Marines, Jonah was recently discharged in May of 2018. As a Sherman High School graduate and with many family members still in the area, returning to this area and Grayson College was an obvious choice for him. Jonah had joined the Marines while still in high school under the delayed entry program because he felt that of all the branches of service, the Marines would provide the most physical challenges for him.

SVA Pres. Jonah Scheibmeir

As a high school student, Jonah knew he was not ready for college. He did not really like school and did not have a clear career plan in mind. The military was an obvious remedy for his circumstances. Military travels took him from stateside posts in California and Virginia to overseas assignments in Cuba, Okinawa and Bahrain and finally to Hawaii. As he was trained in Security and Advanced Urban Combat, Jonah was exposed to a number of real-life military situations that aided greatly in his maturity and character development.

It was during this time that Jonah knew he was

growing and learning while becoming the thinker he is today. Due to several factors and viewing difficult circumstances around the world, the importance of an education beyond high school had become very real to him. Now, as he is eagerly pursuing his Associates Degree at Grayson, his eyes are set on Bachelor's and Master's degrees at the University of North Texas where his major will be Psychology.

As president of the SVA, Jonah hopes to spearhead the efforts to make the SVA a much larger organization by actively recruiting more student veterans for membership. He also plans for the SVA to do more fundraising so that larger contributions can be made to local veteran services, including the Boots to Books Scholarship at the GC Foundation.

Note: Jonah is not the first Scheibmeir to have the title "President" at Grayson College. His grandfather, Dr. Alan Scheibmeir, was in fact Grayson College's 4th president for over 15 years.

William Thompson, Vice-President: As last year's SVA Treasurer, William has demonstrated his desire to contribute and to serve the Student Veterans Association. Even though he is currently a full-time student and works full-time as well, William still makes time to serve his club. To him, it is truly an honor to be a member and an officer of such a great organization.

As a Navy veteran, William has many great memories of his service including observing various cultures around the world and being twice deployed to the Persian Gulf on the U.S.S. Kittyhawk. These experiences were priceless and gave him an increased appreciation of his freedom and educational opportunities. As a result, after he receives his Associate's Degree from Grayson College, William will work on a BBA Degree at Southeastern State Oklahoma University.

The business degree will afford William the opportunity for increased opportunities at his present

employer which is a nearby manufacturing facility specializing in aluminum castings for a variety of customers around the world. Being part of the creation of a product that could be on a laser-guided bomb, an airplane, military equipment or an automobile provides a great sense of satisfaction for William.

SVA V.P. William Thompson

He plans to remain with this company for the duration of his working career.

As a Denison native and Denison High School graduate, William appreciates the academic opportunities so near his home. Like many veterans, he is very glad that he took advantage of the opportunity to serve his country. Because of his military service, the benefits from the VA makes his educational pursuits a lot easier and certainly less stressful.

William shares Jonah's desire to increase SVA membership and the participation of its members. He hopes to show student veterans the academic and personal benefits of networking with other student veterans. When one student veteran has a problem or a question, there's probably another student veteran nearby with the answer or the solution. Student veterans are encouraged to visit the Student Veterans' Hub and attend a club meeting anytime.