

Spring 2025

RET – EXPRESS

From the Association President – Lisa Theriot



Happy New Year to Ya'll! Welcome to 2025! The January Texas Monthly says that we are all going to need some loving guidance in the new year, and my horoscope reads, "In the coming year, you're going to experience a shift from wild expansion to sharp focus, from thinking and planning to knowing and doing. 2025 is going to be a year in which you make your dreams come true". That sounds pretty good to me!

If you missed the Holiday Luncheon at Maggiano's at North Park Mall, you missed a great event. We had lots of time to catch up with former colleagues and friends. George Lawson even showed up! I hope it's not the last event George attends. It was great to see him!

We have several events planned for this spring. You can read more about them in this newsletter, but I wanted to make a pitch for an event I'm planning to attend, Titanic: The Exhibition. I saw this several years ago in St. Louis and I really enjoyed it. As you enter the exhibit, they give you an actual ticket with the name of one of the real Titanic passengers. You walk through a re-creation of the ship's interior, the dock from where it sailed, the boiler room, the promenade deck, a millionaire's stateroom, and of course, the Grand Staircase! I'm planning this event for April 25th at 10:00 a.m. Tickets for seniors are \$23. I added an audio guide for \$10. You'll need to purchase your ticket ahead of time. The location is Pepper Square in North Dallas on Preston Road. There's an Italian restaurant, Beza's Pasta and Pizza in the same shopping center where I'm planning for us to have lunch after our visit.

We are still looking for someone interested in attending theater events and willing to plan these events for the Association. If you want more information, please get in touch with me.

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If you haven't heard, the House and Senate passed the Social Security Fairness Act that repeals the Windfall Elimination Provision that cuts social security benefits to workers receiving a government pension. Biden signed the bill on January 5th. I'll be glad to start collecting all the money I paid into Social Security before I started working for the college.

My husband and I spent a quiet holiday at home this year, as John is undergoing treatment at UTSW Medical Center. The picture I chose for this newsletter is of us at our church's candlelight service on Christmas Eve. It's always a beautiful service! We are blessed to have wonderfully talented musicians leading us in worship.

I don't know about you, but I started looking at my nursery catalogs and planning my spring garden and flowers in January. As I write this message, I still have flowers blooming in my backyard, but that will change tomorrow night as a cold front with real winter weather is on the way.

Be well!

Lisa Theriot

President, Dallas College Retiree Association

Dr. Justin Lonon, Chancellor

January 2025

Chancellor's Message

Greetings and Happy New Year!



As we embark on this new semester, I'd like to take a moment to look back on the remarkable efforts at Dallas College last fall.

The past few months have been bustling with initiatives that continue to impact and enhance student success. One notable effort is our ongoing commitment to providing childcare across our campuses, including [a new partnership with the YMCA to provide drop-in child care at our El Centro Campus](#). With 12% of our student population identifying as student parents, we are proud to offer this solution to continue solving problems and increasing education access for our students.

In addition to breaking barriers for current students, we are focused on clearing pathways for future students through [a recent series of investments via the Dallas County Promise](#). These funds from the O'Donnell Foundation will support a variety of student services, aiding students in their journey to thriving wage careers and offering last-dollar tuition-free scholarships to high-need high school graduates. This initiative has the potential to transform the lifetime earnings of students being educated in Dallas County and add billions of dollars in incremental lifetime earnings to the regional North Texas economy.

Lastly, this year also brings a significant change in Dallas College leadership as we bid farewell and happy retirement to Dr. Christa Slejko, Dallas College North Lake Campus president. After a remarkable 40-year legacy, Dr. Slejko's impact and memories will infinitely inspire future efforts at the college. While we will deeply miss Dr. Slejko, we are thrilled to welcome Dr. Rick Smith as the new North Lake campus president. Dr. Smith brings a unique blend of leadership, and strategic vision, you can expect the collaborative and forward-thinking approach necessary to support the Dallas College mission and continue our progress.

And lastly, regarding our previous work on the topic, I want to inform you that on January 5, 2025, the Social Security Fairness Act, HR 82, concerning the Windfall Elimination Provision and Government Pension Offset, was signed into law. As you may recall, this act will stop the reduction of Social Security benefits for those who receive public pensions from

organizations that didn't pay into Social Security. You can [visit this website](#) for regular updates as the Social Security Administration decides how to implement the new act.

As you may recall, this act will stop the reduction of Social Security benefits for those who receive public pensions from organizations that didn't pay into Social Security. You can [visit this website](#) for regular updates as the Social Security Administration decides how to implement the new act.

As we look ahead to 2025, we are filled with excitement and optimism for the opportunities and potential it holds for our students, employees, and community members. Throughout the next semester, we will remain committed to supporting student success and expanding access to affordable education in Dallas.

As I reflect on the organization's goals for the new year, I want to take a moment to acknowledge your unwavering support and dedication to Dallas College. Thank you for being an integral part of our journey. May your 2025 be filled with peace and many wonderful moments.

Be well,

Dr. Justin H. Lonon

Chancellor

UPCOMING EVENTS

Spring Tour: Garland Depot



Built in 1901, this Santa Fe depot serves as a museum of Garland and North Texas history and is home to the Garland Landmark Society. In addition to touring the depot, we'll get a glimpse inside the Society's 1911 (unrestored) Pullman railcar.

When: **Friday, March 7, 2025**

Location: **393 North 6th Street, Garland**

Time: **11:30 a.m.**

Admission: **Free**

Parking: **Free**

Followed by lunch (on your own) at Dos Banderas Mexican Restaurant, 614 Main Street, Garland, TX

If you would like to participate, please notify Don Baynham at 214-287-7948 or (donbaynham@outlook.com). Limited to 30 people.



The Titanic Exhibit

Join us on April 25th as we embark on the Titanic for an immersive, interactive tour with a re-creation of the ship's interior and exterior. Visit the dock from where the ship sailed, explore the galleries and boiler room, take a look inside the millionaire's suite, stroll the exterior promenade deck under a starry night sky, and see the Grand Staircase with your own eyes. Read the stories of its passengers, see hundreds of artifacts, and discover the tale of the design, creation, launch, maiden voyage, and tragedy of the historic ship.

The exhibition is in far North Dallas at Pepper Square, 14902 Preston Road. We plan to attend on April 25th at 10:00 a.m. and afterward, we will have lunch in the same center at Besa's Pizza and Pasta. You will need to purchase your ticket ahead of time.

Senior (65+) tickets are \$23 and \$10 if you want to purchase the audio guide or the virtual reality experience.

Here's the link to purchase tickets.

<https://www.vividseats.com/search?searchTerm=Titanic+Dallas+tickets>

Please let Lisa Theriot know if you plan to attend so she has a count for lunch reservations. Lmtheriot@msn.com

What: **Titanic** Exhibit

When: **April 25, 2025**

Time: **10:00 a.m.**

Location: **North Dallas at Pepper Square, 14902 Preston Road, Dallas, Texas**

Cost: **Senior (65+) tickets are \$23 and \$10 if you want to purchase the audio guide or the virtual reality experience.**

Tickets: <https://www.vividseats.com/search?searchTerm=Titanic+Dallas+tickets>

Or <https://feverup.com/m/274187>

Contact: **Lisa Theriot** at Lmtheriot@msn.com if interested in attending

YouTube video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PnEr0MxCxq4>

Crow Museum of Asian Art



May I suggest that we visit the (new) Crow Museum of Asian Art, which is located on the campus of the University of Texas at Dallas in the (also new) Edith and Peter O'Donnell Athenaeum. I drove out to preview the collection last week, and it is among the most amazing I have ever seen anywhere. I have scheduled a docent-guided visit for Saturday, March 15, at 11:30. The tour is free.

Now, about finding the museum: If you are approaching from the east on Campbell Road, you will come to an intersection at Floyd Road which says it's the "main entrance" to UTD. Don't turn there! I did and got very lost. Go on to the next intersection (also labeled "main entrance"), which is West Shore. This road will lead you quickly to a circle drive, and on the right side you will see the Athenaeum. Turn right and drive around to the parking lot on the other side of the building; turn in there and go straight across to the far side of the parking lot. You will see a double row of parking places bordered by an orange line. Those spaces are free for museum visitors on the weekend; that's where we need to park. Let's try to get there by 11:15 if possible.

There is a LaMadeleine on Campbell Road near Coit, about three blocks to the west; we could have lunch there after the tour. If you have any questions about these instructions, please e-mail me at bchambers101@verizon.net or call me at 469-271-2684. Please come! I guarantee you will be glad you did!

Bob Chambers, Museum Coordinator



The Biblical Museum of Arts

The museum was founded in 1967 by Mattie Caruth Byrd. It was formerly known as the **Biblical Arts Center**. In 2005, a fire destroyed the museum and 2,500 works of art. The museum was rebuilt and reopened in 2010 in a modern building with eleven galleries and 30,000 square feet of exhibition and event space.

When: **Friday, April 11, 2025**

Location: **7500 Park Ln., Dallas, TX**

Time: 11:00 a.m.

Admission: Senior Citizens **\$15**

Audio Tours **\$ 10.00**

Parking: **Free**

Lunch: **Keke's Breakfast Cafe**

7700 West NW Hwy., Suite 600 in the Lincoln Park Shopping

Since the museum is open until 5 pm, some might want to go back and see the other two exhibits (at extra cost). Please contact Cassie Bowell at (214) 207-0690 or cassandra.bowell@verizon.net to let her know if you plan to attend.



Spring Luncheon and Meeting

Thursday, April 3, 2025

Check-in and Chat

11:00 a.m.—11:30 a.m.

Luncheon and Meeting

11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

El Centro Dining Room, C100

Reservation Deadline: Thursday, March 20, 2025

The registration form is on page 39 of this newsletter.

Enjoy a gourmet lunch of Southern cuisine prepared and served by the students in the award-winning culinary program at El Centro Campus. We don't know the entire menu yet, but the faculty is asking each of us to make a selection, and you will be given an opportunity to make your selection on the registration form.

Cost: \$17 per person (This includes a \$2 "tip" that goes into a scholarship fund for students.)

If you have a dietary restriction, please write it in the space provided on the registration form.

Parking and Transportation: You can take the red, orange, blue, or green DART line to the West End Station. El Centro is one block south. (Schedule and fare information is available at www.DART.org or 214-979-1111.) Schedule and fare information are (not is) available.

There is parking for a fee around the college.

The college has a security officer stationed at each entrance door to check identities. The easiest thing to do is to wear a retiree/employee badge if you have one. If you don't have one, the officers will have a list of those attending the luncheon, so you won't have to sign it and present an ID.

Hope to see you there!



News from Dean and Barbara Armstrong, Retirees of El Centro College



Dean Armstrong is a retiree from El Centro College. His wife, Barbara, was a long-time adjunct faculty member.

Dean and Barbara met when she was five and he was six in Roswell, New Mexico. They went to elementary school together on and off and started dating after reconnecting at a cast show party at the Roswell Community Theater in 1969. Barbara was a senior in high school and Dean was in his first year of college. They eloped in 1970.

Dean retired in 2016 as the Administrator – Humanities and Drama at El Centro after serving 23 years. Barbara was a longtime adjunct faculty member of the Art

Department at ECC for 28 years; leaving in 2022.

Since retirement, Dean and Barbara have continued working in the art scene in and around Dallas. Dean directed *Living Your Best Afterlife Support Group – Online Edition* during the pandemic for Mountain View in 2021. He did makeup design and application for *Frankenstein* and was an actor in *Beer for Breakfast* at the Mesquite Arts Theater in 2024. Dean also acted in *Catch Me If You Can* at the Pocket Sandwich Theater (2020), *Fruitcakes* at the Mesquite Arts Center (2019), and in *Two Gentlemen of Verona* and *The Final Frontier* at Mountain View (2019).

Dean also enjoys Storytelling. He has collaborated on several storytelling gigs at the Bath House Cultural Center at White Rock Lake with Raymond Butler, a talented former student and graduate of El Centro. Most notably Stewpot Stories (drawing a topic out of a pot) and Talking Dirty After Dark (prepared true stories). He has also performed Storytelling at Wild Detectives and Four Corners Brewery. A highlight for Dean in this genre was participating in the Texas State Storytellers Annual Festival in Denton, Texas in March 2024.

Barbara has been busy with her own art. She has had several fiber art exhibits as a member of the Dallas Yarn Bombers and the Dallas Area Fiber Artists. She has had installations at Downtown Lewisville's *Colorpalooza*, McKinney Arts in Bloom, the Bishop Arts District. She participated in a curated, juried show at the Addison Conference and Theater Center in 2024 and had an installation at the Nasher Sculpture Center for the 2024 Spring Break and Children's Celebration. Barbara participated in the 2022 London Kaye show in New York, New York by collaborating on the Peace for Ukraine Crochet Mural, in Oculus displayed in the 2 World Trade Center Transit Lobby.

Dean and Barbara also continue to give back to the community by providing CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) medical trauma makeup to prepare for disasters in Dallas.

By,

Lisa Theriot

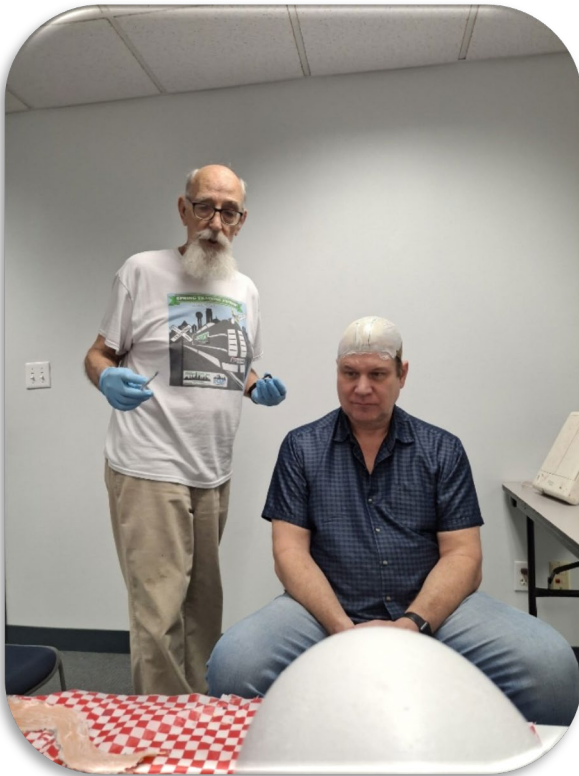
Pictures of Dean and Barbara's Work and Shows



Barbara helping to install Dallas Yarn Bombing's Nasher yard bombing 03/12/2024



Dean storytelling at Stewpot Stories TDAD event Bath House 12/24/2024



Dean preparing actor for Frankenstein 10/24/2024



Frankenstein in costume MAT 10/24/2024

Pictures of Dean and Barbara's Work and Shows (Continued)



Dean in a group for Texas State Storytellers Event
03/09/2024



Peace for Ukraine Mural in Oculus in NYC
(April – June 2022)



Peace for Ukraine Mural in Oculus in New York City (April – June 2022)

Pictures of Dean and Barbara's Work and Shows (Continued)



Barbara with LA CATRINA in DAFA show, Addison, Texas 03/23/2024

Back to School, Ed DesPlas



As many of my Dallas College retiree colleagues know, I failed retirement and was sent back to school. Below are excerpts from a November 12, 2024, San Juan College (NM) press release.

Community College Business Officers (CCBO) announced San Juan College (SJC) Executive Vice President Edward DesPlas as the recipient of the Bob Hassmiller Award for Humanitarian Service during its 2024 Annual Conference held in Savannah, Georgia.

Given since 2013, CCBO Awards recognize the leadership and financial impact made by individuals and departments within community college business offices throughout North America. CCBO is widely recognized as the premier community college association serving current and future business officers and other professionals. It is the only organization dedicated to continuing education for community college business officers.

The Bob Hassmiller Award for Humanitarian Service is given annually to an individual who best exemplifies an exemplary service mindset. A humanitarian is a person who cares about people and often participates in charity or does good work to show that they care; a person promoting human welfare and social reform. “I am honored and humbled to be given this prestigious award,” said DesPlas. “I have worked in community colleges for 47 years. I don’t know exactly when that work changed from a job to a career, but it did. I do know that here at San Juan College, it has gone from a career to a calling”.

Dallas College Events

Dallas County Promise Announces Catalyzing Investments, including \$60 Million Gift From O’Donnell Foundation To Support Ambitious Expansion

Media Contact: Liz Scruggs; MScruggs@DallasCollege.edu

The [Dallas County Promise](#), powered by [Dallas College](#) and [the Commit Partnership](#), is pleased to announce a series of new investments, including an unprecedented \$60 million multi-year investment from the O’Donnell Foundation to dramatically expand student supports to substantially increase economic mobility across Dallas County. The investment is rooted in the proven impact that the Dallas County Promise has created, setting a national example of how to support low-income students in achieving a living wage through educational attainment.

The O’Donnell Foundation investment, one of the largest education investments supporting economically disadvantaged students in North Texas history, will provide more students with the opportunity to benefit from enhanced college and workforce programs as well as numerous other supports promoting student success. Of the \$60 million investment, \$30 million is directed to Commit to comprehensively support stronger middle school and high school advising across multiple school districts as well as data and other backbone supports, including coordination with employers, to enhance the overall Promise effort.

The remaining \$30 million investment from the O'Donnell Foundation represents a direct gift to Dallas College Foundation, the largest private gift in Dallas College's history. These funds will be dedicated to a variety of student supports to aid them in their journey to thriving wage careers. Specifically, the gift features a \$6.25 million challenge grant to help Dallas College continue to expand its Promise scholarship program, which, similar to programs recently announced by other higher education partners across Texas, offers last-dollar tuition-free scholarships to high-need students coming out of high school. The gift will also expand tuition and other forms of support to additional groups of students, including returning adult students, parents of Promise students and students engaging in workforce training programs.

Since 2018, Promise has benefited nearly 27,000 Dallas College students, and program enrollment has surged by 42% since 2023. This effort has the potential to transform the lifetime earnings of students being educated in Dallas County, potentially adding billions of dollars in incremental lifetime earnings to the regional North Texas economy.



In speaking about the impact of this gift, leaders added:

William Solomon, Chairman, President and CEO of the O'Donnell Foundation

"The Dallas County Promise holds the potential to become a national exemplar for materially improving postsecondary access and completion thanks to its thoughtful, comprehensive approach."

Justin Lonon, Chancellor, Dallas College

"This moment marks a bold step forward in Dallas College's mission to empower students and transform lives with the promise of an education. With this extraordinary investment, we will help to expand opportunities for students to access higher education, gain critical support and thrive in the career of their dreams. Together, we're reshaping the future of Dallas County, driving prosperity and opening doors for generations to come."

About the Dallas County Promise

The Dallas County Promise was launched in 2017 to increase postsecondary credential attainment for young adults in Dallas County, supporting thousands of additional students in the completion of a degree from Dallas College and other higher education partners. This expansion transforms the effort from one solely focused on the bridge between senior year of high school and college to one that now coordinates and comprehensively supports each student's journey starting in middle school and ending with a career paying a living wage.

About the O'Donnell Foundation

Since its founding in Dallas in 1957 by Edith and Peter O'Donnell Jr., the O'Donnell Foundation has donated over \$1 billion in support of education, medicine and the arts, almost entirely in Texas.

About Dallas College

Celebrating its 60th anniversary in 2025, Dallas College consists of seven campuses — Brookhaven, Cedar Valley, Eastfield, El Centro, Mountain View, North Lake and Richland — plus a dozen centers located throughout Dallas County. As one of the largest community colleges in the U.S., Dallas College offers online and in-person learning, serving more than 127,000 credit, workforce and continuing education students annually. Students benefit from partnerships with local school districts, four-year universities, industry and community leaders. Dallas College offers associate degrees and career/technical certificate programs in more than 100 areas of study, as well as bachelor's degrees in education and nursing. As the largest provider of dual credit in Texas, Dallas College serves 30,000 high school students through 63 dual credit programs.

About the Commit Partnership

Founded in 2012, the Commit Partnership has become the largest educational backbone organization in the nation, supporting PK-12 and higher ed systems that educate 700,000 students in Dallas County and, via its support of the Texas Urban Council, 1 in 4 students across Texas. The partnership is philanthropically supported by over 150 regional and national investors highly focused on growing economic mobility through a variety of strategies including state and local policy, data insights, capacity building, and alignment of actions across both public and private entities to achieve an aspirational goal of 50% living wage attainment by the year 2040 for all young adults.



Outstanding Faculty Teaching with Dallas College

Dallas College Heroism: Meet Army Captain Steven Drayton

Published by [Dallas College](#)

Dallas College professor and U.S. Army Captain Steven Drayton spent a combined 30 months overseas during two deployments to the Middle East. His most heroic efforts, though, occurred stateside during a routine visit to a barbershop in August 2022 in his hometown of Killeen.

Drayton stopped [an armed robbery](#), saving the lives of his then-11-year-old son, fellow barbershop patrons and employees. Drayton received the prestigious Soldier's Medal for his actions this past summer.

During Dallas College's celebration of Veterans Day, Dallas College was proud to highlight veterans such as Drayton who continue to serve our community and country. He opened up about that harrowing day, serving our country, and his passion for higher education.

Barbershop Visit

On Aug. 4, 2022, Drayton was taking his son Malachi for a haircut before the upcoming school year. That's when he noticed an individual in a black hoodie, something he described as "strange since it was 106 degrees that day."

"Then, I heard a scream outside. I looked through the doors and saw a young lady being pulled by a man who had just robbed the store," he said. "He hit her in the face, and I sprang out the door. When I got outside, he was brandishing a gun

and trying to enter the barbershop. I pushed the doors open, wrestled him to the ground, and struggled with him for about five minutes to get the gun away and secure him until the police arrived."

That quick, decisive action by Drayton is the reason why a potentially horrific day turned into something admirable and celebrated. The Soldier's Medal reflects that as it is one of the military's most distinct honors. Drayton mentioned [Vietnam veteran Colin Powell](#) as a fellow recipient.

Without question, Drayton said, his military background prepared him for that type of incident, although it's not something he expected

to happen in that situation. He's grateful he was at the barbershop that day.



“When I saw him with a weapon, I knew I could possibly die, but I was willing to sacrifice myself to protect my son and the other kids in that barbershop,” he said.

Called To Serve

Drayton grew up in a military family and followed in those footsteps when he enlisted in the Army in January 2005 as a combat engineer. He rose up the ranks, becoming the first in his family to achieve the rank of officer. He is now a captain in the Army reserves and was the former Headquarters Company commander of the 3-289th Training Support Battalion.

“I enlisted because, like many other college students, I was unsure about what I wanted to do. My family has a military background, and I thought I might give it a shot,” Drayton said. “Once I got in, I found a passion for being a leader and guiding people. I didn’t expect to do 20 years; it was just supposed to be three years. But I ended up deploying twice to Iraq for two 15-month tours.”

Given his family’s history, Drayton has always had a sense of patriotism and that has deepened and strengthened through his service. That, more than anything, is what he likes to reflect on during Veterans Day.

“My family members opened doors for me, and I had the privilege of watching them wear the uniform,” he said. “Veterans Day is a chance to thank them for their sacrifices that allow me to teach at Dallas College and help our students dream big.”

Passion for Education

How important is it for Drayton to encourage students to dream big? Well, he makes a 2 1/2-hour drive from Killeen to our Cedar Valley Campus four days a week to do just that.

He has been teaching logistics at Dallas College since 2018, making the lengthy commute in order to help the college jumpstart [the Logistics and Supply Chain Management program](#).

The time commitment and mileage have been worth it as the program has become one of the most popular at Dallas College. The program is consistently at, or near, full capacity.

“I always tell everybody that with Logistics and Supply Chain Management, you’re getting into a field that has nothing but upward mobility,” Drayton said. “Any company that you work for needs someone handling the supply chain aspect of the job—figuring out how to get products from the company to the customer. There are very few layoffs in this field.

“If you look at what happened during COVID, many companies struggled, but the logistics side was still open and thriving. You can also expect to earn between \$22 and \$35 an hour, which is a living wage.”

Outside of the classroom accomplishments, Drayton praised Dallas College for being military friendly, saying he’s never had issues when he had to leave for training or fulfill military obligations. That’s why he’s more than happy to make the daily drive every day up I-35.

“Working at Dallas College has been one of the best jobs I’ve ever had,” Drayton said. “I drive 2 1/2 hours for something I love, and that’s because of the environment here and the connection with the students. Dallas College feels like home for me.”

Finding A Way — Dr. Brandon Morgan Changes Lives Through Education

Published by [Dallas College](#)



Brandon Morgan, Ed.D., faculty in the School of Education, understands exactly what it's like to be a Dallas College student — he was one himself once.

Morgan received his associate degree from Dallas College's Mountain View Campus, where he now teaches.

As a first-generation college student, Morgan's road to higher education wasn't without hurdles, but he now works to clear the path for others on the same journey.

From Academic Probation to Ed.D.

"An interesting fact that I always share with my students is that I graduated from Mountain View on academic probation," he said. "Being on academic probation really changed my mindset about how I see college and what I wanted to see in my future."

One of the courses Morgan teaches today is Learning Framework — the class he credits with changing his perspective on education and giving him the tools and resources to succeed in school. "The strategies I teach now are some of those same strategies and techniques that really changed my life for the better."

After graduating from Mountain View in 2014, Morgan went on to earn his bachelor's degree a year later from Lamar University. One year after that, he earned his master's degree from the University of North Texas and immediately started his Ed.D. at Nova Southeastern University, which he completed in 2019.

Morgan knew from an early age that education was his calling. During his senior year in high school, he served as an office assistant where he connected with his high school principal, Cheryl Ensley.

"I didn't even know you could do a doctorate in education," he said. "She was first doctor I met. I got to talk to her about her journey, her background and perspective."

Inspired, Morgan planned to become a principal himself. He began his career at Dallas Independent School District, eventually entering the principalship program. While in the program, though, he realized it wasn't the route he wanted to take. Instead, he attended a job fair at Dallas College's Cedar Valley Campus and was hired as an adjunct on the spot. In 2019, he was hired as full-time faculty at Mountain View.

Transforming Lives

What he appreciates most about Dallas College are the resources each campus provides to its students — from the food pantry and clothing closet to the academic support provided through the Learning Commons.

"That extra layer of support for students is what initially helped me get my associate degree. Even when I was on academic probation, I feel like I was really supported from every individual on campus."

Now, Morgan is paying it forward by providing that same support to others, both at Dallas College and through his nonprofit organization, Found A Way.

The organization supports individuals from low socioeconomic backgrounds by providing GED programs in addition to food and utility assistance. The goal for Morgan is to help other first-generation students, like himself, navigate the college process.

“The organization started with all my past failures. I went through so many failures with applying to college, whether it was doing the FAFSA application wrong to not knowing or understanding the college process.”

Ultimately, Morgan believes that despite the obstacles, education is a barrier-breaker that can transform lives. “Education can change an individual’s life, change their financial status and give them more opportunities to be a productive citizen in this world — it did it for me.”

Dr. Paul Benson Uses Stories to ‘Teach and Delight’

Published by [Dallas College](#)

Paul Benson, Ph.D., loves to tell stories.

Storytelling is the best way for students to learn and remember information, Benson said.

“If you tell a story in class, students are ... more likely to remember the information than if you just told them the bare facts.”

Sure enough, they remember. Benson recalls one day — just a few years after he started teaching — when he ran into a former student in the grocery store.

““Hey, I know you,’ the student said. ‘You’re Dr. Grimes. I had you at Cedar Valley in American Literature. Did I get it right?’ I said, ‘No, I’m Dr. Benson. I’m over at Mountain View. You might have had me in World Religion.’”

The student told him that he remembered a story Benson had shared in class. He then recited the story word for word.

“He can’t remember my name, my school, the class, but he remembers the story.” Benson said, and then laughed.

“I became a storyteller after that.”

That scenario has repeated itself through the years, illustrating for Benson how effective storytelling can be.



A One-Year Contract

After more than 50 years at Dallas College, Benson has taught everything from English and literature to world religion, humanities and even film courses.

But he had never even heard of community college when he came across a job posting for a teaching position in Dallas. At the time, he was working on his doctorate in English at the University of Washington — but he ran out of money.

He remembers going to the University of Washington’s business office one day hoping they’d have a job for a one-year replacement for someone going on a sabbatical. They didn’t. But they did have an advertisement to interview with Dallas College.

Benson decided to give it a shot.

When the interviewer reviewed his portfolio, he said “It’s a one-year contract. We’d love to have you. But I want to warn you, I think you might be staying longer than one year.”

Benson responded, “We’ll see.”

Dr. Paul Benson stands beside a tree dedicated in his honor as a pioneer faculty member at Mountain View Campus.

“I can’t imagine a better job than what I have.”

When he arrived at Dallas College in 1970, construction of the Mountain View Campus was underway. During his first semester of teaching, he had only chairs, a blackboard and no windows or air conditioning. And because they were still in the middle of construction, Benson taught over the sound of jackhammers.

But the experience, he said, was amazing and surprising. “What I loved first and foremost was the people here. Everything was so perfectly run, so professionally run.” He also loved the opportunity to be more of a generalist, teaching a wide variety of courses instead of teaching the same subject repeatedly.

When his one year was up, a friend asked him, “So, you’re getting ready to go back to Seattle?”

Benson told him, “Yes, but I really don’t want to go. I have to finish my degree.”

His friend asked him what his goal was. Benson responded: “To teach in college.”

The friend pointed out that he was teaching in college. And if he liked it here, he should stay and transfer his hours to a Texas school to finish his doctorate.

“I thought about what he said for a long time, and then I decided it made a lot of sense. So, I went to the University of North Texas and got my Ph.D., and I think my decision to stay here was one of the better decisions of my life ... I can’t imagine a better job than what I have.”

Teach and Delight

Through the years, Benson has had the opportunity to create and lead several programs, both for Dallas College and nationally. He’s directed institutes for the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Library of Congress, providing summer programs for faculty from colleges and universities across the country — the only community college professor to do so. These programs not only provided teaching material for faculty to take back to the classrooms, they also helped generate research in the field.

When Benson’s not in the classroom, you might find him around Dallas-Fort Worth presenting programs for the community on topics like Baroque art or famous Texas preachers.

But inside the classroom there is one thing he enjoys most: “Seeing that look of revelation come on the faces of students who go ‘Oh, I get it!’ or ‘Oh, I didn’t know that.’ I like to get them to thinking about things that they had never thought about before and to question things.”

He takes to heart a famous Greek saying for educators: “Teach and Delight.”

“If you don’t delight when you teach, it’s never that effective.”

And the way he delights in the classroom is through storytelling. “It’s the storytelling that I enjoy, and it’s what the students enjoy,” he said. “They take delight in the story, but they don’t realize how much they’re learning in that. So, I try to teach and delight.”

Embracing Empathy — Elgie Hurd Teaches Practical Lessons in Psychology

Published by [Dallas College](#)

He is a faculty member for the Psychology and Sociology Departments at the Brookhaven Campus of Dallas College. He has been sharing practical, real-world lessons with Dallas College students since he was hired at the Brookhaven Campus.

Hurd imparts on his psychology and sociology students the importance of having empathy for other people's experiences.

"We live in a very polarized country, and I think one of the reasons our country stays so polarized is we don't understand other people's perspectives outside of our own," he said. "In my classes, regardless of what I'm teaching, my hope is that students will — while they may not agree with a different perspective — have better context as to why that other perspective exists, and why we may embrace that perspective."

From Middle School to College Classrooms

Hurd completed his undergraduate and graduate degrees first in sociology before returning to school to study industrial organizational psychology. Currently, he's working on his doctorate in leadership studies at Dallas Baptist University. His experience spans industries: corporate, nonprofit and higher education.

But his teaching career actually began in the middle school classroom of his hometown in California.

"If you could pack the college experience into a middle school experience, I think that would be the perfect storm for me," he said. "I think middle school students are awesome. And to be able to teach where I grew up, and even to have a relative of mine in my class, was real full circle for me."

From there, Hurd relocated to Texas and taught high school. His classes included everything from psychology to sociology, reading, U.S. history and English. After working as an adjunct at other local colleges and universities, he was hired at Brookhaven — teaching a 7:30 a.m. class.

But his students showed up every morning, a testament to Hurd's ability to engage them in the material and meet them where they were. For Hurd, the first step was not assuming everyone who was taking the class was going to be a psychologist.

"I tried to be as intentional as I could to create a learning environment where we talk about how psychology can be applied in real life in the real world," he explained. "That's been my selling point for the duration of teaching classes: How can this be applied to someone who may never take a psychology class ever again?"



Dallas College Proud

In his classes, Hurd is also a strong advocate for the community college experience. Community college is important, he believes, because it makes education accessible to everyone.

“What I love about teaching at Dallas College is anyone can come here,” he said.

There’s value in Dallas County residents — regardless of their background — being able to take classes designed specifically for the local community, he says.

“Community colleges are one of the most underappreciated jewels in higher education. You have small class sizes, you get the chance to know your instructors, you get the chance to really be part of the community if you so choose. Going to a community college shouldn’t be seen as an insignificant or less prestigious experience in higher education.”

His goal is for his students to take pride in their Dallas College experience.

“I think it’s important that students be proud that they go to Dallas College. And I think it’s important that as employees we give students a reason to be proud to be part of Dallas College. That we give the community a reason to be proud of supporting Dallas College. And I think our everyday challenge is to make sure that we are doing our best work to support the students, to support the community and to support each other. That’s what makes us a community college.

“I have one of the most privileged jobs in higher education. That doesn’t mean it’s not hard, that doesn’t mean it doesn’t come with its challenges, but I get to encourage students to think critically, to engage in current events, and I think that’s a powerful thing that everyone does not have the opportunity to do.”

Making Music — Dr. Kathryn Brownlee Inspires Students to Create

Published by [Dallas College](#)



When Kathryn Brownlee, Ph.D., professor of music and commercial music, isn’t teaching students at Dallas College’s Cedar Valley Campus, she can be found conducting the New Texas Symphony Orchestra (NTSO), an all-volunteer community orchestra she founded that’s now in its 19th season.

“One of my big passions is community music,” Brownlee said. “I think it’s so important for people to keep making music. I think it makes us better humans because it helps us stay in touch with ourselves in ways that I don’t think can be done in any other field.”

Brownlee started the NTSO to fill a void she saw in the community. At the time, there was no community orchestra in the city of Dallas proper. Today, the NTSO provides free concerts across Dallas.

“To be able to play for people who don’t think this type of music is for them, or who just haven’t had the opportunity to be in a room with it, is just really exciting to me,” Brownlee said.

Musical Beginnings

Brownlee traces her love of music back to her days playing the saxophone in sixth-grade band. She continued band throughout high school and college, earning a bachelor's degree in music education.

What she loves most about music is “the emotional connection, creativity and being able to be creative even with something that’s printed on a page. You make it yours when you play it.”

In the '90s she served as the artistic director of the Oak Lawn Band and was also asked to direct the Cathedral of Hope's church orchestra. It was her work with Cathedral of Hope that inspired her to return to school to improve her knowledge of strings.

Her high school and college experience had not included strings. So, to get better at working with the instruments, Brownlee pursued her master's degree in music education with a certificate in orchestral conducting from the University of Texas at Arlington.

Working as a graduate teaching assistant at UTA, she also found her passion for teaching at the college level.

“It was there that I found my people,” she said. “I found the age and the students that I really wanted to work with, so that’s partly what encouraged me to go into my doctorate.”

Conducting the Classroom

As she was finishing her master's degree in 2003, a friend recommended she apply for a music lab coordinator position at Dallas College's Cedar Valley Campus. In her second year, she became an adjunct professor and, eventually, full-time faculty.

A former community college student herself, Brownlee understood the benefits that Dallas College provided its students.

“I definitely have a heart for community college, for the benefits and the wonderful experiences of learning in a smaller environment and smaller classes,” she said.

As for Dallas College, Brownlee loves the wide range of opportunities for students — particularly with the commercial music program, which prepares them for the workforce. One of her favorite classes to teach is commercial recording technique, where students produce their own radio jingle, learning practical, transferrable skills — from marketing and advertising techniques to directing and coaching others.

But Brownlee's lessons extend far beyond simply making music. The biggest piece of advice she always gives to her class is one that can be applied to all areas of life: “Honor where you are and be OK with where you are. Don't compare yourself to everyone around you because their path is different than yours. You're in the place where you're supposed to be.”



Financial Aid Benefits Many Students

Financial Aid is a career no one sets out to pursue. You usually fall into it. After earning a BS in Elementary/Special Education I taught first grade for two years and found I did not have the patience or creativity for children that young. I had a friend who was an Assistant Director of Financial Aid at a proprietary school, and they were hiring Financial Aid Clerks. I was hired and within 6 weeks became the coordinator of the campus office and became the Director of Financial Aid Training. For the next 35 years, I spent the majority of my career in community college Financial Aid

offices. Twenty-one of those years were spent at Dallas College. I first worked at El Centro as the Director of Student Financial Support and Services then at Brookhaven as the Director of Financial Aid. During my 35 years, I have assisted countless students with securing the funding they required to pursue their education. It was a very rewarding and satisfying career. I earned an MEd in Higher Education Administration along the way.

Aid packages provide how students may pay their educational expenses to attend school and attain their degrees. This is not only beneficial for the student but for their entire family. Gift aid was always the priority when funding students. These were dollars the students did not have to repay. Scholarships being a large part of this funding, we frequently suggested various scholarships to students as well as free scholarship search services. My office administered all internal and external scholarship funds. I have so many memories of students who received scholarships from organizations like the Retiree Association and others.

During my tenure in Financial Aid, there were a few students who particularly stood out and were scholarship recipients. First was a single mom who we were able to award scholarship funds to assist her with childcare while she attended classes. Another was a first-generation college student and his sister both were attending classes. They shared a car not only to get to classes but also to McDonald's where they both worked to help support themselves and their family. They needed funding for car repairs. We were not only able to provide them with scholarship funds to make the necessary repairs but also give them information about the National Hispanic Scholarship. The young man ended up receiving funding from them. Finally, I distinctly remember a young veteran student whose benefits were delayed, and he needed assistance with funding for housing. We were able to provide him with some scholarship funds to get him over the hump until his VA benefits became active.

When working with students, scholarship recipients were often the most appreciative, since many of them had no other funding for one reason or another. I am proud to have been heavily involved with the Rising Star Scholarship program during the time I worked at Dallas College. Often these students had no other funding available to them and these funds allowed them to attend school when they had no other means to do so. I always enjoyed Commencement. It was a very proud, satisfying moment for me to finally put a face to the name of the students we had assisted.



By John Wells, Former Director of Financial Aid, El Centro College



Lifelong Learning with Dallas College

Here is a link that will direct you to review the Spring 2025 Lifelong Learning classes offered. The two rubrics we normally use are SRCZ and PHEZ. **What is the Lifelong Learning program?**

The Dallas College Lifelong Learning (formerly Emeritus) program is designed to promote the life-long learning of our 55+ community through a range of credit & continuing education courses including non-credit academic and personal enrichment courses that are customized just for older adults. Senior adults who are 65+ can enroll in any of Dallas College's 11,000 credit-based courses per semester by using the senior tuition waiver. There are some paid options for continuing education course offerings.

65+ Tuition Exemption

The tuition waiver covers up to six credit hours per semester* and will be applied at the time of class registration. Tuition exemption is for credit courses only and does not apply for tuition waivers for tuition-based continuing education courses. Lifelong Learning students must not be degree-seeking students as required by the senior adult tuition waiver.

Who qualifies for the tuition waiver?

- You must be 65 at the time of registration, not on the first day of class.
- You must have lived in Texas for 12 months.
- You must currently live in Dallas County with proof of residency.
- Must complete the Transcript Waiver if applicable for students taking credit-based courses.

Interested in the Dallas College Lifelong Learning program?

If you are interested in receiving more information or want to receive our monthly Lifelong Learning program newsletter by email, please fill out the following form. You will be contacted by a staff member within 1-2 business days.

[Request More Information](#)

All of the Lifelong Learning classes are listed under this link:

[eConnect - Spring 2025 - Special Terms/Topics - Lifelong Learning \[Emeritus\] Senior Adult Program](#)

Information on Registering for Continuing Education (CE)

Everything you need to know about Senior Adult Tuition Waivers

Tuition Waivers are for Lifelong Learning (Senior Adult) students wishing to take credit classes for free. The tuition waiver covers up to six credit hours per semester* and will be applied at the time of class registration.

Who qualifies?

Qualifications are the same for Continuing Education as Lifelong Learning and these courses do not apply toward a degree.

Depending on the type of class you want to take (Credit based, Continuing Education- paid or no cost tuition classes), you can enroll by either clicking the:

- [Application for Continuing Education Online application](#)

or

- Students seeking admissions to credit-based classes should use the [ApplyTexas application](#).
- Non-degree seeking students should complete the [Dallas College Senior Transcript Waiver form](#).

If interested in learning more, the Dallas College Continuing Education link is:

<https://ceschedule.dallascollege.edu/spring/>



New Retirees: Welcome! We know you've looked forward to the day when you didn't have to get up early to go to work. Relax, you can now sleep as late as you want, take all those exciting trips that you've planned, and simply enjoy the good life of retirement. Our retiree association welcomes you to retirement and hopes you will join our organization.

Employees who retired August 2024 through December 2024

Name	Location	Retirement Date	Name	Location	Retirement Date
Bayne, Kathleen	RLC	12/31/2024	Edwards, Cathleen	MVC	12/31/2024
Brown, Judith	DSC	09/30/2024	Le, Liem	RLC	12/31/2024
Burns, April	NLC	12/31/2024	Monkress, Denise	ECC	11/30/2024
Cuttill, Karen	RLC	12/31/2024	Ogbeide, Mike	ECC	11/30/2024
Dewberry, Tadaaki	DSC	10/31/2024	Shiple, Denise	MVC	12/31/2024
Duncan, Kaethryn	MVC	12/31/2024	Watson, John	BHC	09/30/2024

Dallas College Retiree Website



Have you visited the Dallas College Retiree Website? If not, there is a wealth of information. You can stay informed on Retiree events. Read the latest newsletter, with information provided on how to contact the Retiree Executive Board and coordinators for any questions you might have about the association or activities.

Whether you are considering retirement, or you are a current retiree, you will be provided with telephone numbers and web addresses for Teacher Retirement (TRS) and Employee Retirement Services (ERS). There is even information regarding Medicare. If you have never visited this site, you want to make sure you can obtain the information you need. I encourage you to bookmark this website at

<https://www.dallascollege.edu/employees/retirees/pages/default.aspx>



To join the Retiree Association or donate to the Retiree Association student scholarship, please print or replicate this form. Insert your personal information, and mail it with your check or money order made payable to the “Dallas College Retiree Association”

Today's Date: _____
Last Name: _____
First Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____
State: _____
Zip: _____

* Phone: ☐ _____

* Email: ☐ _____

Retirement Campus: _____

*Please note: If you do not want your phone number and/or email address to appear in the retirees' directory, please indicate by placing a ✓ mark in the appropriate box.

Questions about membership dues? Contact Diane Graifemberg at (972) 818-0546 or email dgraifemberg@gmail.com

Annual memberships are renewable on January 1st of each year.

Mail to Diane D. Graifemberg,
Treasurer
13656 Janwood Ln.
Farmers Branch, TX 75234
OR
Pay with Zelle (972) 816-0546

2025 Membership (January – December)

Annual Membership Dues	\$10
<u>OR</u>	
Lifetime Membership Dues	\$100
Scholarship Donation	_____

TOTAL Enclosed	\$_____



Membership

Retiree Association Membership Roster

2025 LIFETIME MEMBERS

Contact Diane Graifemberg at dgraifemberg@gmail.com or call Diane at (972) 816-0546 if you have questions about your membership status.

Olivia Novelo Abreu
Patricia Acrea
Thomas Adams
Mary L. Adams
Johnnyce Alders
Ken Alferts
Gemmy Allen
Monique Amerman
Lois Ames
Thomas Anderson
Joy Arndt
Brenda Arnold-Darensbourg
Mary Lou Avera
Linda Baker
Ella Barber
Nancy Barlow
Don Baynham
M. Sharman Beasley-Vesecky
Marvin Bechtold
Mildred Bell
Rodger Bennett
Vernon Beuke
Peggy Biegler
Martha Black
Chris Boldt
Patricia Bollin
Dru Bookout
Casandra Howell
Cynthia Bowlin
Darlene Branscome
Dee Brock
Jacqueline Burden
Patricia Byars
Claude Caffee
Susan Calhoun
Luis Camacho
Ray Canham
Robert Carpenter

Jacquelyn Caswell
Enrique Chamberlain
Robert Chambers
Maria Chobany
Carol Cinclair
Richard Cinclair
Glenn Clayton
Jean Conway
Tammy Cooper
Mary Cooper-Wallace
Lionel Cortez
Joe Cortina
Charles Dale
Brenda Dalton
Merry Ellen Daniel
Joe David
Alberta Davis
Patricia Davis
Vivian Dennis-Monzingo
Edward Des Plas
Barbara Dogger
Karen Doss-Harris
William Drake
Irene Dryden
Deborah Dutschke
Glenda Easter
Lisa Ehrich
Ines Eishen
Marvin Elke
Frank Ellis
Phyllis Elmore
Roz Ewalt
Patricia Ewert
Larry Felty
Sarah Ferguson
Delryn Fleming
Marcia Funnell
Zina Gardner

Susan Garza
Mary Frances Gibbons
Herlinda Glasscock
Tony Gobar
Mariaelena Godinez
Angela Gomez
Linda Gomez
Robert Gonzalez
Stephen Gooch
Carole Gray
David Gregory
Lindle Grigsby
Sandy Groom
Jonathan Haight
Susan Hall
Tony Hall
Ramona Hamilton
Velma Hargis
Nancy Harrison
Tricia Harrison
Virginia Hayes
Kathry Hegar
Tom Henderson
Patricia Henry
Jimmie Henslee
Jerry C Henson
Dorothy Herndon
Marilyn Herridge
Maria Hinojosa
Margot Hirsch
Linda Hoffman
Martha Hogan
R. Chris Holland
Mike Howard
Norm Howden
Martha Hughes
Sarah Hutchings
Pamela Ice

Dallas College Retiree Association 2025 Lifetime Members (Continued)

Nathan Ivey	Gina Nelson	Tim Smithart
Mary Alice Jacquez	Sandra Newton	Beth Sonnier
Claralyn Jefferson	Annetta Norwood	Maas Tony Sookoor
Jamie Jenkins	Spencer Olesen	Debbie Speck
Hector Jimenez	Carole Olson	Patricia Spence
Ann Johnson	Kay O'Neal	Hal Spiegel
Carole Johnson	Mary Osentowski	Susanne Starling
Rosa JohnsonBecky Jones	Jerry Owens	Rosemarie Steffen
Jesse C. Jones	Ursula Palmer	Dava Stephens
Virginia D. Jones	Joan Parent	Wanda Stimson
Mahon Justice	Nanette Pascal	Becky Stinson
Carol Karsteadt	Angela Perez-Michael	Donna Strain
Costas Katsigris	Dan Perkins	Jimmie Strain
Susan Klutts	Mary Petterborg	Marilyn Sullivan
Cindy Krause	James Picquet	Tim Sullivan
Karen Laljiani	Jennie Pollard	Trudi Swedlund
Chris LaLonde	Rodger Pool	Lisa Theriot
Anita Landenberger	Judy Pouncey	Darrell Thompson
Lawson, George	Maria Caratini Prado	John Trickle
Nancy LeCroy	Pam Quinn	Robert Trotter, Jr
Alice Lee	Reva Rattan	Bobbie Trout
Rita Lewis	Marty Ray	Kathryn Tucker
Peggy Little	Calvin Richard	Bettie Tully
Barth Loe	Donna Richards Reininga	Susan Turner
Kathleen Long	Linda Richardson	Stephen Twege
Victoria Magee	David Riehl	Travis Ueoka
Diane Martin	Margaret Jackson Riley	Ronald Van Gordon
Willadean Martin	Cynthia Risher	Cheryl Dyer Vargas
Fred Martinez	Vic Rizzo	Finney Varghese
Marco Martinez	Claudia Robinson	Alice Villadsen
Rick Maxwell	Maria Rojas	Carolyn Vines
Marilyn Mays	Pamela Rouze	Laura Waddle
Mary Metcalf	Lonnie Roy	Tarrilynn Wall
Jana Meyer	Viola Ruck	Janet P. Ward
John Millemon	Susan Russell	John Wells
Ellen Miller	Sally Satterwhite	Don Welsh
Susan Miller	Herlinda Savage	Monica Wenthold
Frank Millsap	Jerome Scardina	Ellen Whitaker
John Minnett	Patricia Scardina	Charles Hale Wickersham
Diana Moore	Dawn Segroves	Jill Ann Williams
Michael Moore	Kelly Sexton	Becki Williams
Georgeann Moss	Philip Shelp	John Williamson
Pierrette Mouledous	Carole Shlipak	John Willis, Jr.
George Mount	Anahita Sidhwa	A Burlene Willson
Susan Muha	Jane Slone	Jennifer Wimbish
Lou Myers	Ronald Slone	Robert Young
Rosemary Neiman	Bea Smith	

2025 Annual Members from January 1, 2025 – September 30, 2025 (Continued)

Joe Allison	Cathy Edwards	Sherry Jessup
Eva Anderson	Lynda Edwards	Christa Jones
Mel Anderson	Delores Elder-Jones	Jerry C. Jones
Janice Andrews	Margaret Etheredge	Pat Jones
Angela Auzenne	Vallye Ezell	Margarette Jones-Davis
Donnine Balance	Nancy Faris	Shirley Kaczka
David Bartley	Pamela Farley	Doug Keenan
Bartz, Gerald	Barbara Field	Ida Keller
Heidi Basett	Peggy Fleming	Dorothy Keylon
Nancy Beaver	Juanita Flint	Linda Kleen
Joan Becker	Bill Fowler	Frank Korman
Delfina Bedarte	Georgia Francis	Cecilia Kornegay
Michael Bell	Jerry Francis	Judith Lambert
Cindy Berry	Alice Fulbright	Len Larsen
Joanett Blackburn	Betty Fuller	Annie Lee
Bart Blaydes	Ed Garcia	Terry Lefler
Earlene Bond	Elaine Gardner-Morales	Doris Leigh
Rebecca Boriskie	Kim Garrett	Sue Lichten
Carolyn Boshart	Michael Garza	Paul Lindsey
Branscum, Charles	Claire Gauntlett	William Lineberry
Barbara Branum	Jacquelyn Glee	Veda Little
Sheila Brock	Larry Goff	Sharon Loftis
Betty L. Brown	Katherine Gonnet	Scott Longacre
Linda B. Brown	Claudia Goodson	Marie Maness
Vicki Buford	Una Gordon	Monique Mannering
Leslie Burkel-Powell	Regina Gowans	Ivan Martinez
Helen Butler	Diane Graifemberg	Joan McAdams
Chris Cantrell	Karla Greer	Adrienne McClain
Patsy Caropresi	Sharon Grubbs	Jerry McElveen
Joan Carroll	Eileen Harding	Judy McMullan
Jean Chapoton	Vera Estelle Haynes	Earldene McNeill
Dennis Cheatum	Mary Jo Henry	Marti Mendiola
Tina Chin	Gus Herring	Norma Mendoza
Rich Chumbley	Rose Marie Hilmer	Rosalinda Minnis
Mary Ciminelli	Thomas Hilmer	Sandra Mogollon
Howard Clapper	Trina Ho	Betty Moran
Cynthia Clements	Jo Holland	Traci Morin
Adriana Cobo-Frenkel	Helen Howard	Larry Mosby
Liz Craddock	Ora Howard	Tom Motley
Pamela Crawford	Robert Hueston	Barbara Murray
Glenn Currier	Debbie Hutchison	Claudia Neeley-Plog
Tonya Daily	Mary Kay Jacobson	Barbara Murray
Millie Davidson	Robert James	Claudia Neeley-Plog
Dorothy Jean Disher	Patti Jennings	Bobby Nieman
Dianna Drury	Sharlee Jeser-Skaggs	

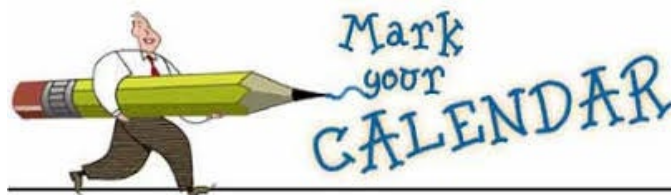
2025 Annual Members from January 1, 2025 – September 30, 2025 (Continued)

Linda Noblin	Cynthia Ann Rogers	Charlotte Tunnell
Gwen Oliver	Jeanette Rogerson	Stephanie Venza
Daisy Ollie	Lincoln Rolling	Sharron Wagoner
Clara Sue Parks	Theresa Rose	Jo A. Walker
Tony Pecina	Jane Rowe	Thomas Walsh
Julienne Pendleton	Janie Rubalcava	Carolyn Washington
Cathy Perez	Anne Schroeder	Joan Washington
Jackie Peterson	Ladan Scott	Jeanice Weatherford
Jane Peterson	Adrienne Settles	Clifton Weaver
Jack Pierce	Isa Shores	Joel Weiner
Guy Pollock	Kathy Slonecker	Bill Wells
Rose Pope	Mary Smith	Bill White
Jackie Porter	Rosemary Smith	Jim White
Joyce Powell	Lupe Solis	Jerome Williams
Katherine Pritchett	Marilyn Stacy	Kay Wilson
Ernest Rager	Jeff Stagner	Linda Wimbish
Sulema Ramos	Brenda Stevenson	Becky Witherspoon
Diana Reding	Janet Stiles	Shirley Woelfle
Josie Regnault	Paul Styrvoky	Evelyn Wong
Jackie Reynolds	Rise Talbot	Joseph Wong
Frances Rhodes	E. Simone Thaxton	Hugh Wood
Cheryl Roach	Martha Timberlake	Linda Youmans
Nancy Roberts	Elena Torres	Marla Ziegler
Peggy Rodgers	Irma Tovar	

“All annual membership dues are due and payable on January 1st. If you have not yet renewed for 2025, please do so as soon as possible.”

Opportunities...

Garland Depot	03/07/2025
Crow Museum of Asian Art	03/15/2025
Spring Luncheon.....	04/03/2025
Biblical Museum of Arts	04/11/2025
The Titanic Exhibition	04/25/2025
The Holiday Luncheon.....	12/09/2025




Do You Have Your Email Set Correctly to Receive the Latest Retiree News




When you login to the retiree website is:

<https://www.dallascollege.edu/employees/retirees/pages/default.aspx>, are you getting all the latest news from the retiree association? To ensure that you receive everything, please make sure that you go to the bottom of the page, under **Retiree Help Center**, and select **How Do I Update My Contact Information**. When you click on that, it will take you to a form to update your information, as shown below.



[Events, Newsletters & College News](#)

Learn about upcoming retiree events, catch up on the newsletter and the latest news from Dallas College.




[Official Business](#)

Read RA mission statement, official meeting minutes and bylaws.

[Student Scholarship Winners](#)

[Retiree Hall of Honor Winners](#)



[Recent Retirees](#)

View a list of Dallas College faculty, staff and administration who have recently retired.

[Retiree Association History](#)

Retiree Help Center

[How Do I Update My Contact Information?](#)

[Help With Retiree Email Accounts](#)

[How to Export Contacts From Outlook \(Video\)](#)

[How to Import Contacts Into Outlook \(Video\)](#)



Retiree Association Change of Contact Information Form

We would like to stay in touch with you! Please use this form to update any of your information: address, phone number or email address.

If you complete this form, all of your contact information will be sent to the Administrative Office at the District so that they can update your email address in the system. Under eMail, you will input **your current email address**. This does not have to be a dallascollege retiree account. It can be any account that you currently use. If you need assistance, I will be happy to guide you through the process to ensure that you have done it correctly. Feel free to contact me by phone at (214) 532-6733 or by email at geaster@retiree.dcccd.edu. Making this update will aid you in receiving the newsletter and any important messages from our president or our chancellor. **Please note:** As of February 2023, new retirees are no longer eligible for a dcccd.retiree email.



Holiday Luncheon

2025 Holiday Luncheon

The Retiree Association has gone to Maggiano's in North Park for many years for our holiday luncheon meeting. It has many advantages:

- the food is good and because it is served family-style, you can ask for more of anything that is served;
- there is plenty of free parking and complimentary valet;
- it is beautifully decorated for the holiday season;
- the mall is also beautifully decorated;
- many attendees do some Christmas shopping after the luncheon.

Over the years the price has gone up some, but in the past three years, it has gone up \$5 each year, so that in 2024 the cost was \$50. Many of our retirees felt that was too much money and didn't attend. We will be going to a different place for our 2025 holiday luncheon. We will go to Celebration Restaurant on Lovers Lane. Celebration has been around for over 50 years; many of us are familiar with it from years ago. It is down-home cooking. We will be able to select from a menu of 3-4 entrees; there will be an open bar. The cost will be around \$30. The date will be Tuesday, December 9. Details and the registration form will be in the fall newsletter.



Retiree Association Scholarships

Georgia and Lisa Theriot met with Lori Tatsch regarding the Retiree Association Student Scholarship.

In addition to all the wonderful scholarships managed by the Dallas College Foundation, our own Retiree Association Scholarship has continued to grow. We currently have \$14,707 in our endowment and \$8,557 available for scholarships. We award two \$1,000 scholarships each year. Two of our members serve on the review team. Two dollars from each Annual Membership renewal and twenty-five dollars from each Lifetime Membership go toward our scholarship. In addition, you can give money to the scholarship at any time by mailing a check to our Treasurer, Diane Graifemberg at 13656 Janwood Lane, Farmers Branch, Texas 75234 or send by Zelle to (972) 816-0546. Thank you for considering the Retiree Association Scholarship in your giving. Georgia Francis and Lisa Theriot recently met with Lori Tatsch, Dallas

College Scholarship System Coordinator, to discuss a new process for awarding scholarships that will streamline the process for students. To donate, mail a check to Diane Graifemberg, Treasurer 13656 Janwood Ln., Farmers Branch, TX 75234, or *Pay with Zelle (972) 816-0546*





Maggiano's Holiday Luncheon and Business Meeting

December 10, 2024

The luncheon and business meeting were called to order by the Retiree Association President Lisa Theriot at 1:00 p.m.

Welcome

Lisa Theriot, President of the Retiree Association welcomed the members to the luncheon and business meeting.

Minutes

Attendees asked to review a copy of minutes from the Spring meeting; Gus Katsigris moved to approve; seconded and approved.

Treasurer's Report

Diane Graifemberg, Treasurer, reviewed the Treasurer's report (a copy for each attendee was provided at the table). Diane pointed out expenses for printing and postage in 2024 which was the biggest expense we have. We will work more toward providing electronic newsletters and the retiree directory rather than printing. Robert Young made a motion to approve to use more technical deliver, Gus Katsigris seconded the approval of the report. Approved.

Lisa reminded us that the newsletters are on the website for anyone to read. Lisa encouraged all to join the Retiree Facebook.

Upcoming Events Were Discussed

Georgia Francis spoke about the museum tour scheduled for Friday, March 14; planned by Bob Chambers.

The Spring Lunch/Meeting is scheduled for April 3, 2025, at El Centro.

Today, each person is asked to read and respond to the handout regarding ideas for next year's holiday lunch/meeting.

Retiree's Association Scholarships

Lisa and Georgia met with District Foundation representatives regarding a new scholarship process. Lisa will write an article for the Spring newsletter with more information on this new process.

Sharman Beasley-Vesecky asked for help to get information on scholarships she has endowed.

Gus Katsigris asked about combining the Retiree Association scholarship funds to make an endowed scholarship.

Door Prizes

Rosie Steffen and Lisa Theriot coordinated the drawing of the tickets and handing out the door prizes. The door prizes donated by various businesses and retirees.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Graifemberg

Retiree Association Executive Board and Event Coordinators

<i>Retirees Association Executive Board</i>		<i>Retirees Association Event Coordinators</i>	
<i>President</i>	Lisa Theriot Lmtheriot@msn.com (214) 537-4294	<i>Theater</i>	Vacant
<i>President-Elect</i>	Vacant	<i>Special Events/ Luncheons</i>	Rosie Steffen rosie.steffen.rn@gmail.com (972) 699-9549 and Georgia Francis gsfrancis@aol.com (214) 505-1766
<i>Secretary</i>	Linda Savage ljsavage50@gmail.com (972) 989-0032	<i>Museum</i>	Bob Chambers bchambers101@verizon.net
<i>Treasurer</i>	Diane Graifemberg dgraifemberg@gmail.com (972) 816-0546	<i>Social Media</i>	Norm Howden rrgrandad@gmail.com
<i>Newsletter Editor</i>	Glenda Easter geaster@retiree.dcccd.edu (214) 532-6733	<i>Historical Tours</i>	Don Baynham donbaynham@outlook.com
<i>Past President</i>	Rodger Bennett rpbfape@gmail.com (214) 886-6893		



President Biden Signs into Law

President Biden on Sunday, January 5, 2025, signed legislation repealing two controversial tax provisions impacting the retirement benefits of some federal workers and other public servants into law, effectively increasing Social Security benefits for more than 2 million retirees.

The Senate voted 76-20 to pass the Social Security Fairness Act ([H.R. 82](#)), introduced by Reps. Abigail Spanberger, D-Va., and Garret Graves and passed out of the House last November, just before

lawmakers left for the Christmas break, sending the bill to Biden's desk. The measure repeals Social Security's windfall elimination provision and government pension offset.

The windfall elimination provision reduced the Social Security benefits of retired federal workers and other public servants who spent a portion of their career in the private sector in addition to a federal, state, or local government job where Social Security was not intended as an element of their retirement income, such as the Civil Service Retirement System. The government pension offset reduces spousal and survivor Social Security benefits in families with retired government workers.

"The bill I'm signing today is about a simple proposition: Americans who have worked hard all their lives to earn an honest living should be able to retire with economic security and dignity," Biden said during a signing ceremony Sunday. "Social Security is the bedrock of financial security for retirees, survivors, and for millions of Americans with disabilities. But the law that existed denied millions of Americans access to the full Social Security benefits they earned by thousands of dollars per year . . . Those benefits cuts cost them security, and a little bit of dignity as well."

With the law's enactment, more than 2 million retired public servants impacted by the WEP and 750,000 spouses and survivors affected by the GPO will see an increase on average of \$360 per month to their Social Security benefits. Many also will receive a lump sum payment for the money they missed out on due to the two provisions over the entirety of 2024.

In a statement Sunday, Bill Shackelford, national president of the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association, lauded the president for finally signing the bill that took years for Congress to pass, despite bipartisan support.

"Since their inception, NARFE (National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association) has opposed the windfall elimination provision and government pension offset as unfair penalties that punished hardworking public servants by reducing their Social Security benefits," he said. "Today, history was made, and President Biden signed the Social Security Fairness Act into law. This milestone represents the culmination of years of tireless advocacy by NARFE and its members, who time and again made the case for fairness and equality in Social Security benefits."

In a statement Monday, the Social Security Administration acknowledged the bill's enactment and said the agency is "evaluating" how to implement it.

<https://www.govexec.com/pay-benefits/2025/01/biden-signs-windfall-elimination-provision-repeal-law/401967/>

Elimination of the Windfall Provision

Representatives Jason Smith (R-MO) and Ron Estes (R-KS) have told the Social Security Administration (SSA) to create a plan to implement the [Social Security Fairness Act](#). That measure repeals both the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO).



The WEP and GPO reduce Social Security benefits for workers and spouses, respectively, if they are covered by a pension benefit from a public employer that is exempt from Social Security tax withholding. Representatives Smith and Estes are the incoming chairs of the House Committee on Ways and Means and its Subcommittee on Social Security, respectively.

Though the Social Security Fairness Act was passed on January 5, 2025, the SSA has not yet announced how and when they will implement the legislation, including its retroactivity through 2024.

[The letter](#) was addressed to Carolyn Colvin, the acting Commissioner for the SSA. It called on the SSA to “provide Congress and the public with clear guidance on how it will deliver immediate relief to those who have been impacted by the flawed WEP and GPO.”

The congressional leaders also asked Colvin to answer a number of questions in writing. They asked the SSA to:

1. Describe a plan to implement the Social Security Fairness Act
2. What action, if any, beneficiaries must take to adjust their benefits
3. How and when related notices will be given to affected beneficiaries
4. What resources SSA need to implement the repeal
5. How long does SSA need to implement the repeal

What will the administrative cost savings for SSA be in the long-term due to “the administrative complexity of the two policies” which SSA will no longer have to administer

The letter calls for a response from SSA by January 17, 2025.

When asked for comments, a spokesperson for SSA said “We received the letter. We will respond directly to Chairmen Smith and Estes.”

<https://www.asppa-net.org/news/2025/1/implement-wepgpo-repeal-congressional-leaders-urge/?ite=47052&ito=1687>



Windfall Elimination Provision

<https://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10045.pdf>

A law that affects your retirement or disability benefit*

The Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) can affect how Social Security calculates your retirement or disability benefit. If you work for an employer who doesn't withhold Social Security taxes from your salary, any retirement or disability pension you get from that work can reduce your Social Security benefits. Such an employer may be a government agency or an employer in another country.

**Public Law 98-21, Social Security Amendments of 1983, enacted 20 April 1983.*

When your benefits can be affected

The following provisions can affect you if both are true:

- You earn a retirement or disability pension from an employer who didn't withhold Social Security taxes.
- You may be eligible for Social Security retirement or disability benefits from work in other jobs for which you did pay taxes.

The WEP can apply if one of the following is true:

- You reached age 62 after 1985.
- You developed a qualifying disability after 1985.

If the latter applies, you must first have become eligible for a monthly pension based on work where you didn't pay Social Security taxes after 1985. This rule applies even if you're still working.

This provision also affects Social Security benefits for people who performed federal work under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) after 1956. We won't reduce your Social Security benefit amount if you only performed federal work under a system such as the Federal Employees' Retirement System (FERS). Social Security taxes are withheld for workers under FERS.

How it works

Social Security benefits are intended to replace only some of a worker's pre-retirement earnings.

We base your Social Security benefit on your average monthly earnings adjusted for average wage growth. We separate your average earnings into 3 amounts and multiply the amounts using 3 factors to compute your full Primary Insurance Amount (PIA). For example, for a worker who turns 62 in 2025: the first \$1,226 of average monthly earnings is multiplied by 90%; earnings between \$1,226 and \$7,391 are multiplied by 32%; and the balance is multiplied by 15%. The sum of the 3 amounts equals the PIA, which is then decreased or increased depending on whether the worker starts benefits before or after full retirement age (FRA). This formula produces the monthly payment amount.

When we apply this formula, the percentage of career average earnings paid to lower-paid workers is greater than higher-paid workers. For example, consider workers age 62 in 2025, with average earnings of \$3,000 per month. They could receive a benefit at FRA of \$1,671 (approximately 55%) of their pre-retirement earnings increased by the applicable cost of living adjustments (COLAs). For a worker with average earnings of \$8,000 per month, the benefit starting at FRA could be \$3,167.50 (approximately 39%) plus COLAs. However, if either of these workers starts benefits earlier than their FRA, we'll reduce their monthly benefit.

Why we use a different formula

Before 1983, people whose primary job wasn't covered by Social Security had their Social Security benefits calculated as if they were long-term, low-wage workers. They had the advantage of receiving a Social Security benefit that represented a higher percentage of their earnings. They also had a pension from a job for which they didn't pay Social Security taxes. Congress passed the WEP to remove that advantage.

Under the provision, we reduce the 90% factor in our formula and phase it in for workers who reached age 62 or developed a disability between 1986 and 1989. For people who reach 62 or developed a disability in 1990 or later, we reduce the 90% factor to as little as 40%.

Some exceptions

The WEP doesn't apply if:

- You're a federal worker first hired after December 31, 1983.
- You're an employee of a non-profit organization which was exempt from Social Security coverage on December 31, 1983. This does not apply if the non-profit organization waived exemption and did pay Social Security taxes, but then the waiver was terminated prior to December 31, 1983.
- Your only pension is for railroad employment.
- The only work you performed for which you didn't pay Social Security taxes was before 1957.
- You have 30 or more years of substantial earnings under Social Security.

The WEP doesn't apply to survivors benefits. We may reduce spouses or surviving spouses benefits because of another law. For more information, read *Government Pension Offset* (Publication No. 05-10007).

Social Security years of substantial earnings

If you have 30 or more years of substantial earnings, we don't reduce the standard 90% factor in our formula. See the first table that lists substantial earnings for each year.

The second table shows the percentage used to reduce the 90% factor depending on the number of years of substantial earnings. If you have 21 to 29 years of substantial earnings, we reduce the 90% factor to between 45% and 85%. To see the maximum amount we could reduce your benefit, visit www.ssa.gov/prepare/government-and-foreign-pensions. The maximum reduction in 2025 is \$613 a month.

A guarantee

If you receive a relatively low pension, and that pension is fully or partially based on earnings after 1956 where you did not pay Social Security taxes, there's a law that might help you. In most cases, we won't reduce your Social Security full retirement age benefit by more than half of your pension amount.

For a more detailed estimate of how the WEP Guarantee may affect your Social Security benefit, please visit www.ssa.gov/prepare/government-and-foreign-pensions to access the WEP Online Calculator.

For a more detailed estimate of how the WEP Guarantee may affect your Social Security benefit, please visit www.ssa.gov/prepare/government-and-foreign-pensions to access the WEP Online Calculator.

Note: Legislation (Section 419c of Public Law 108-20, the Social Security Act of 2004) requires state and local government employers to provide a statement to employees hired after January 1, 2005 or later a Job Not Covered by Social Security. This form is the SSA-1945 form.

Medicare

If the retirement or disability benefit that you receive is not enough to cover the entire Medicare Part B premium, we will use your benefits to offset the cost of the premium. After all credits are applied, we will bill you for the remaining balance once a year.

Contacting Us

The most convenient way to do business with us is to visit www.ssa.gov to get information and use our online services.

Year	Substantial earnings	Year	Substantial earnings	Year	Substantial earnings
1937–1954	\$900	1990	\$9,525	2015–2016	\$22,050
1955–1958	\$1,050	1991	\$9,900	2017	\$23,625
1959–1965	\$1,200	1992	\$10,350	2018	\$23,850
1966–1967	\$1,650	1993	\$10,725	2019	\$24,675
1968–1971	\$1,950	1994	\$11,250	2020	\$25,575
1972	\$2,250	1995	\$11,325	2021	\$26,550
1973	\$2,700	1996	\$11,625	2022	\$27,300
1974	\$3,300	1997	\$12,150	2023	\$29,700
1975	\$3,525	1998	\$12,675	2024	\$31,275
1976	\$3,825	1999	\$13,425	2025	\$32,700
1977	\$4,125	2000	\$14,175	Years of substantial earnings	Percentage
1978	\$4,425	2001	\$14,925	30 or more	90%
1979	\$4,725	2002	\$15,750	29	85%
1980	\$5,100	2003	\$16,125	28	80%
1981	\$5,550	2004	\$16,275	27	75%
1982	\$6,075	2005	\$16,725,	26	70%
1983	\$6,675	2006	\$17,475	25	65%
1984	\$7,050	2007	\$18,150	24	60%
1985	\$7,425	2008	\$18,975	23	55%
1986	\$7,875	2009–2011	\$19,800	22	50%
1987	\$8,175	2012	\$20,475	21	45%
1988	\$8,400	2013	\$21,075	20 or less	40%
1989	\$8,925	2014	\$21,750		

<https://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10045.pdf>



We Extend Our Sympathy to the Families of Those Retirees Who Have Passed Away

Retirees of Dallas College Who Have Passed Away

- Gene Gibbons, a retiree of BHC, passed away on 10/03/2024.
- Hector Jimenez, a retiree of CVC, passed away on 10/20/2024.
- Dana Stall, a retiree of ECC, passed away on 11/02/2024.
- Cecilia Kornegay, a retiree of EFC, passed away on 11/05/2024.
- Reba Blackshear, a retiree of ECC, passed away on 11/26/2024.
- Richard Cinclair, a retiree of EFC, passed away on 01/03/2025.
- Gary Verrett, a retiree of RLC, passed away on 01/21/2025.

Retiree Family Members who have passed

- Gene Gibbons, husband of Mary Frances Gibbons, a retiree of RLC, passed away on 10/03/2024.
- John Alvin Rath, brother of Norma Vanlandingham, a retiree from DSC, passed away on 12/20/2024.
- Richard Sinclair, husband of Carol Cinclair, a retiree from BHC, passed away on 01/03/2025.



Spring Luncheon and Meeting Reservation Form

Event Date: Thursday, April 3, 2025

Reservation Deadline: Thursday, March 20, 2025

NAME: _____ PHONE # _____

ADDRESS _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

GUEST NAME(S): _____

Enclosed Amount: _____ (no. of persons) x \$17(per person) = _____

Please indicate if you have dietary restrictions or
if you are a vegetarian _____

Make check payable to:

Retiree Association

Mail to:

Diane Graifemberg, Treasurer

13656 Janwood

Farmers Branch, TX 75234

OR

Pay with Zelle to 972-816-0546

Please make your selections below:

First Course

☐ Baby Spinach Salad

☐ Roasted tomato herb
soup

Entrée

☐ Southern Sirloin Steak
with mushroom sauce

☐ Chicken and Dumplings

If you do not wish to print this form, please write this information on a sheet of paper and send it to Diane Graifemberg.

Retiree Association Events



Aldredge House

On October 18, 2024, members of the Dallas College Retirees Association toured the Aldredge House on Swiss Avenue. Designed by architects Hal Thomson and Marion Fooshee, it was completed in 1917. In 1921, George Aldredge, Sr., and his wife Rena (nee Munger) bought the house. In 1974 Rena gave it to the Dallas County Medical Society Alliance Foundation, which manages the property today. The Aldredge house is the most original home on Swiss Avenue, having remained virtually unchanged since its completion. After the tour, the group enjoyed lunch at El Fenix Restaurant in Casa Linda.



The Alderage House (Continued)



The Alderage House (Continued)



The Alderage House (Continued)



The Holiday Luncheon



The Holiday Luncheon (Continued)



The Holiday Luncheon (Continued)



The Holiday Luncheon (Continued)



The Holiday Luncheon (Continued)

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Be on the lookout for events posted on the [Retiree Website](#) and the [Dallas College Retiree Association Facebook page](#).

For help joining contact Norm Howden at rrgrandad@gmail.com

This entire newsletter is also posted on the [Retiree Website](#) with photos in color.