

# THE RIVER IS RISING REPORT



PEARL RIVER  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

MAY 2022



THE RIVER IS RISING | MAY 2022

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# COMMENCEMENT MESSAGE

## FROM DR. MARTHA LOU SMITH



**Dr. Martha Lou Smith**  
*Senior Vice President for Instruction/Provost*

Early on an upcoming Thursday morning, you will see two or three people from the Physical Plant with rolls of string. Kite flying? Trotlining? Disproving String Theory? No, just Geometry and Algebra at work. For several hours that morning, the Physical Plant will use the string to make perfectly straight lines, north and south, on the football field. Someone has conveniently already drawn the east and west lines. Next are the calculations. How many rows and how many will be on each row to accommodate 400 chairs? The day doesn't happen without this important group of folks, string, and math.

Less than 24 hours later the stadium will hum with an infectious energy. Music will start to play. A string of matching shirts will appear worn by invaluable volunteers who direct, guide, usher, and herd. These are the same people who process, advise, teach, and guide on other days. Multitalented and big-hearted might be better descriptions of them. These matching shirts represent the individual strands of a rope that when wound together create a strong support system for students. The day doesn't happen without this group either.

Students will be escorted to the rows of carefully prepared chairs. Family members will file into the stadium bleachers. Soon, a line will thread its way from the chairs to the podium to the cameras and back to the chairs. Pictures will be taken. Smiles and tears will be on the same faces. They've studied,

**To commence is to start. The graduate is starting the next step of his or her life journey.**

**—Dr. Martha Smith**

grown, and made life-changing decisions. A graduation ceremony is hosted to celebrate the successes of each year's graduates. Each year, it feels like that was the best year ever—and it was. And, this year's will be the best too. The day is for this group.

A tapestry is a fabric wall hanging that shows an image, oftentimes telling a story. Woven from many threads, if any are missing, the story isn't complete. Our students have tapestries that they started long before they ever wove a wildcat into them, but each member of the PRCC community becomes a thread in each student's tapestry. Did you recruit the student? Did you process the application? The financial aid? Were you the advisor? The instructor? Did you prepare the buildings and grounds for the student? Were you the family member offering constant encouragement? Graduation is known as a commencement ceremony. To commence is to start. The graduate is starting the next step of his or her life journey. Pearl River will always be woven into the student's tapestry—no matter the day.

*Martha Lou Smith*

# GRADUATION 2022

FRIDAY, MAY 6

DOBIE HOLDEN STADIUM

**9:30 a.m.** - Graduates of Career/Technical Programs,  
including Allied Health & Nursing

**2:30 p.m.** - Graduates earning Associates in Arts Degrees

**LIVE STREAM: [PRCC.EDU/GRADUATION](https://prcc.edu/graduation)**





**P**earl River Community College is inviting prospective and returning students to “ROAR with the BEST: Where YOU are the main character” in 2022-23. PRCC launched its new theme for the upcoming school year Friday with the hopes of empowering Wildcats to define their own success while pursuing a first-class education.

With more than 40 Career Technical Education pathways and numerous academic pathways for those seeking to continue at a four-year college or university, there is something for practically everyone at PRCC.

In Fall 2021, PRCC climbed to the fourth largest community college in Mississippi for the first time in the modern era of the school. The college has also stayed above the state’s enrollment average for 17 consecutive semesters. The continued growth has been fueled by a solid foundation for academics or career technical training and the commitment to keep PRCC affordable and accessible

“ROAR with the BEST comes from believing that what we have to offer at PRCC will be the best two years of a student’s journey,” said Vice President of Enrollment Management and Business Services Candace Harper. “As Mississippi’s fastest growing community college, we have proven that we strive to do our best to offer a quality education at an affordable price with a dedication to offering the best service we can.

“Students will learn from some of the best instructors in the state, participate in some of the best athletics and fine arts programs in the community college system, and do those things in the best facilities at this level.”

PRCC wants to tap into the idea of “Main Character Energy” as the underlying vibe for the upcoming school year. This idea of being the main character of your life in all you do has gained significant traction on social media in the last few years. At the heart of it is the idea of knowing your self-worth and taking actions that will help you control your path in life.

“When you work with best, you believe you’re the best,” said Harper. “We want that confidence to spill over into our students as we pour into them. This is where our ‘ROAR with the BEST: Where YOU are the main character’ theme comes into play.

“We want our students to know that they have the ability to write their own story, to choose the main character they aspire to be, and become the best version of themselves. It is an honor to help them write their story and we believe there’s no place better than PRCC to lay that framework.”

#### SCHOLARSHIP CONTEST

High school seniors and returning Pearl River Community College students, do you want to earn free tuition for Fall 2022? We want to see how YOUR Main Character Energy will help you ROAR with the BEST at PRCC!

All you need to do is post a video to TikTok showing off your Main Character Energy! To be eligible to win, you must use the hashtags #MainCharacter #MainCharacterEnergy #MainCharacterPRCC and tag PRCC’s official TikTok account @PRCC\_Wildcats.

THREE (3) lucky Wildcats will win! ONE (1) student will earn a full scholarship for the fall semester and TWO (2) more will receive half-price tuition in Fall 2022.

To be eligible, you must have an admissions application on file at PRCC and live in one of our six county districts.

Winners will be selected and notified on Wednesday, June 1.

#### HALF-PRICE TUITION

For Summer of 2022, PRCC will be offering half-price tuition for all students attending, whether full-time or part-time. Many of the classes are offered online to allow students to complete the work on a more flexible schedule.

All that is needed to receive this discount is to register for the classes. The college will adjust the fees for you. **RRR**





**HALF-PRICE OFFER DETAILS**

Full-time students taking 15 to 21 credit hours will pay \$813 instead of \$1,625. Part-time students will pay \$70 per credit hour instead of the normal \$140 per hour.

This deal is applicable only to summer courses at PRCC. This deal only includes the cost of the course by credit hour. The promotion is for regular tuition paying

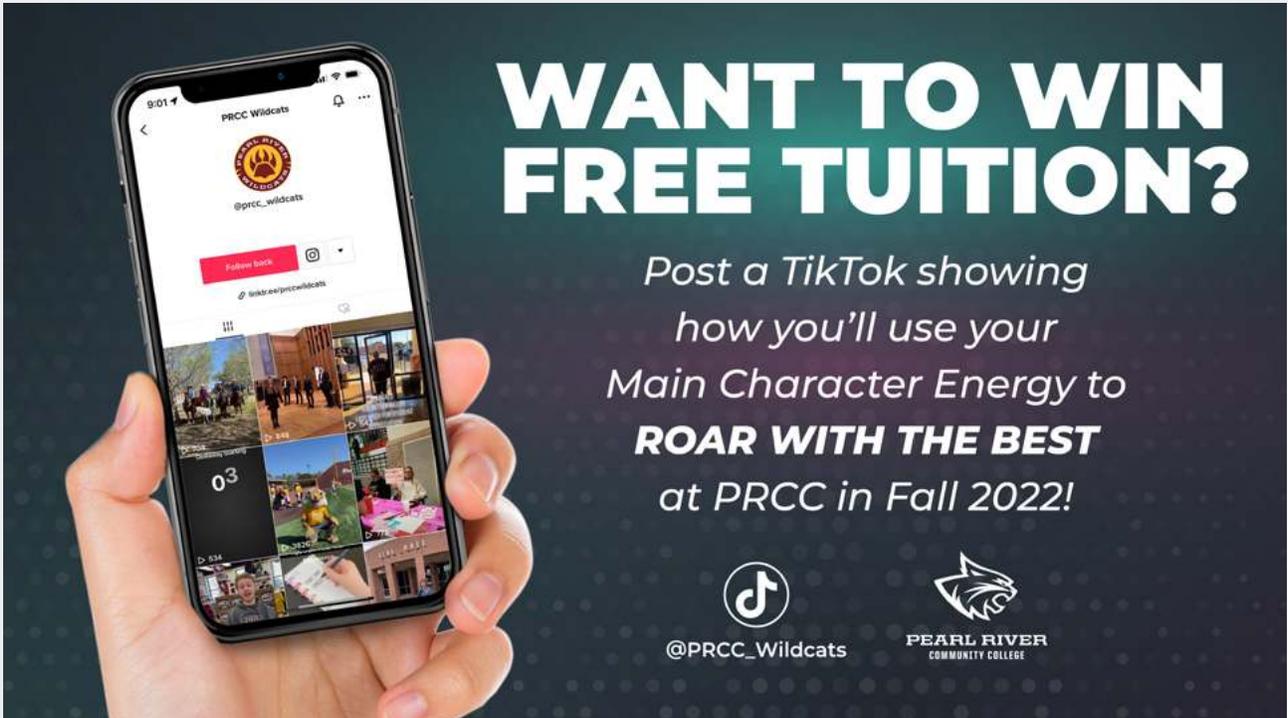
students only. Promotion does not apply to already discounted programs. Dual enrollment students do not qualify due to their current discounted program.

**HOW TO ENROLL**

Enrolling at Pearl River Community College requires just three simple steps:

1. Apply for Admissions online and have your transcript sent.
2. Apply for Financial Aid, including doing your FASFA.
3. Sign up for ROAR, our orientation program to help you have the BEST experience as a Wildcat.

Visit [PRCC.EDU/Admissions](http://PRCC.EDU/Admissions) to become a Wildcat today. **RRR**





## PRCC RECOGNIZES EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS AT 2022 AWARDS DAY

Pearl River Community College hosted its annual Awards Day ceremony on Tuesday in the Ethel Holden Brownstone Center for the Arts. Students, faculty, staff, family and friends joined together in celebrating the success of these students while wishing them success in their future endeavors.

Vice President for Poplarville Campus and Student Services Jeff Long welcomed every-

one to the ceremony. He took time to thank each group in attendance as each played a role in making it all possible.

The presentations began with recognizing the two students in Phi Theta Kappa named to the All-Mississippi Academic Team this year, Erin Clifford of Ocean Springs and Takia Young of Lumberton. Clifford was also recognized as a Phi Theta Kappa 2022 Coca Cola Gold Scholar.

PRCC President Dr. Adam Breerwood presented the University of Southern Mississippi Presidential Transfer Scholarship to Maggie Gressett of Lake.

Each department representing career technical education programs and main academic pathway presented a “Student of the Year” award to the top student. The nursing department presented several different awards for specific areas of nursing instruction.

**RRR**

### **Department of Business Technology**

**Accounting Technology:** Talia Carter of Petal  
**Business Management Technology:** Jodi Jarrell of Carriere  
**Medical Billing & Coding Technology:** Joni-Lynn Williford of Carriere

### **Department of Family & Consumer Sciences**

**Barbering:** Victoria Faciene Evans of Carriere  
**Cosmetology:** Jamie Thompson of Carriere  
**Early Childhood Technology:** Hannah Forbes of Sandy Hook

### **Department of Drafting & Instructional Technology**

**Automation & Controls Technology:** Connor Lee of Bay St. Louis  
**Drafting & Design Technology:** Katie Farmer of Picayune  
**Electronics Technology:** Jorge Alcantara of Carriere

### **Department of Fine Arts and Communication**

**Theatre:** Miranda Dickson of Lucedale  
**Music Vocal:** Savannah Diamond of Lumberton  
**Music Instrumental:** Charles Byrd of Lumberton  
**Public Speaking:** Chandani Patel of Diamondhead  
**Art:** Maximus Jones of Foxworth

### **Department of Humanities and Social Sciences**

**Criminal Justice:** Holden Nored of Hattiesburg  
**English:** Ladiya Hayes of D’lo and Corrina Law of Poplarville  
**History:** Kennedy Baham of Carriere and Conner Mallette of Vancleave  
**Psychology:** Kaitlin Bennett of Picayune  
**Sociology:** Stephanie Shawver of Picayune

### **Department of Marketing, Media, & Information Technology**

**Business Marketing & Management Technology:** Lauren Lee of Picayune  
**Computer Networking Technology:** Rory O’Neill of Poplarville  
**Film and Video Technology:** Mason Runnels of Hattiesburg

### **Department of Nursing Education**

**Dosage Calculations for Nursing:** Mikel Foley of Petal  
**Fundamentals of Nursing:** Lauren Lagman of Picayune  
**Medical/Surgical Nursing I:** Jeremiah Holmes of Foxworth  
**LPN to ADN Day:** Faris Brown of Columbia  
**Women’s Health & Newborn Nursing:** Kristen Toohey of Slidell, LA  
**Nursing Care of Children:** Logan Cuevas of Purvis  
**Mental Health:** Bryce Moran of Kiln  
**Medical/Surgical Nursing II:** Hannah Lods of Carriere  
**Poplarville Day Outstanding Practical Nursing Student:** Alyson Waizenegger of Saucier

### **Department of Occupational Training**

**Automotive Technology:** Troy Chambliss of Hattiesburg  
**Electrical Technology:** Lindsey Faye Nunn of Purvis  
**Heating, AC & Refrigeration Technology:** Philip Toler of Carriere  
**Welding Technology:** Nicholas Powell of Vicksburg  
**Department of Science, Mathematics, & Business**  
**Accounting:** Lyndsey Lee of Carriere  
**Biology:** Emma Bahr of Ocean Springs  
**Business:** Anniston Childs of Poplarville  
**Chemistry:** Emily Rigney of Waynesboro and Madilyn Waters of Laurel  
**Computer Sciences:** Khoa Nguyen of Bay St. Louis  
**Physics:** Jaiden Burns of Carriere  
**Mathematics:** Annie Ladner of Perkinston  
**Engineering:** Bradley Stines of Poplarville  
**Anatomy and Physiology:** Chandani Patel of Diamondhead

### **Hancock Center**

**Leadership:** Christopher Fortner of Bay St. Louis  
**Citizenship:** Cassandra Lassabe of Bay St. Louis  
**English:** Christopher Fortner of Bay St. Louis  
**History:** Cameron Ingersoll of Bay St. Louis  
**Mathematics:** Rachel Meadows of Bay St. Louis  
**Psychology:** Cameron Ingersoll of Bay St. Louis  
**Sociology:** Jennifer Antoine of Pass Christian  
**Welding Technology:** Sheldon Moore of Waveland  
**Unmanned Aerial Systems:** Caleb Malone of Diamondhead  
**Nursing:** Erroll Bowser of Pass Christian

### **Department of Health, Physical Education & Recreation**

**Male Scholar Athlete:** Matt Mercer of Richton  
**Female Scholar Athlete:** Bryanna Taylor of Byram  
**Wildcat Wellness:** Chandler Dickson of Hattiesburg and Jenniya Milton of Braxton

### **Wildcat Way Award**

Jaiden Burnes of Carriere	Sydney Salter of Vancleave
Grant Holladay of Kiln	Bradley Stines of Poplarville
Annie Ladner of Perkinston	Kellie Watts of Picayune
Kristina Langley of Lumberton	Carson Ward of Luin
Taylor Lauckner of Diamondhead	Justin Whitfield of Picayune

# MISSISSIPPI SPACE GRANT CONSORTIUM STEM STUDENT STIPEND AWARDEES



*Carlee Cockrell*



*Honor Elchos*



*Annie Ladner*



*Ahmarion Luckett*



*Kellie Watts*

**F**ive Pearl River Community College students have been selected to receive the Mississippi Space Grant Consortium STEM Student Stipend Award for 2022.

Applicants were selected based on their work completed in the STEM Club as an active member, their coursework at PRCC, service to school & community, and recommendations by instructors. Each student received \$500 that can be used to offset the expenses of attending college.

This year's honorees were Magee's Carlee Cockrell, Honor Elchos of Hattiesburg, Annie Ladner of Nacaise, Ahmarion Luckett of Sallis and Kellie Watts of Picayune.

"Being part of the Mississippi Space Grant Consortium helps provide opportunities for our STEM students to explore different STEM career pathways, STEM internships, and funding to continue student's educational goals," said PRCC Space Grant (MSSGC) Coordinator and Instructor of Biology Melinda Miller. "We are fortunate to have our PRCC administration support our Space Grant program goals each year along with the NASA Space Grant in Mississippi and the NASA's Office of STEM Engagement."

## 2022 STEM AWARD RECIPIENTS

Cockrell is a sophomore who graduated from Simpson County Academy. She is quite active on serving as Vice President of Leadership for Phi Theta Kappa, a River Navigator (Student Recruiter), Sophomore Representative for the Dr. William Lewis Honors Institute, and a Sophomore Representative for Student Government Association. She is also a Forrest General Hospital Student Ambassador and works at

The Vault Restaurant in Magee as a waitress on the weekends.

She plans to attend Mississippi College to further her studies in Biology-Medical Sciences while minoring in Chemistry. She aspires to attend the University of Mississippi School of Medicine with the goal of becoming an anesthesiologist.

"This award helps me pay for my schooling at PRCC while I am becoming one step closer to my long-term goal of becoming an anesthesiologist," said Cockrell.

Elchos is a freshman who graduated from Sumrall High School. He is currently a freshman representative for the Honors Institute and an active member of PTK. After PRCC, he plans to attend Mississippi State University to get a degree in biomedical engineering.

"This award is a great help in paying for school supplies and brings peace of mind so that I do not have to worry about funds as much," said Elchos.

Ladner is a sophomore who graduated from Hancock High School graduate. She is currently the Vice-President of the Dr. William Honors Institute and a member of PTK. She plans to attend Mississippi State university in the fall to pursue a degree in civil engineering.

"This reward will help me to cover the cost of tuition at Mississippi State," said Ladner.

Luckett is a freshman who graduated from Leland High School. He plans to attend Mississippi State University or University of Southern Mississippi to study physical therapy.

"Receiving this award would help me buy the equipment to prepare for this long journey ahead," said Luckett.

Watts is a freshman who graduated from Picayune High School. She plans to attend Mississippi State to major in electrical engineering. Her current career aspirations are to work for a company needing electrical engineers, such as NASA, Chevron, etc.

"Receiving this award helps me expand on my education goals with extra and needed backup," said Watts. "I am using this money to fund my future education in additional expenses at PRCC. I am also using this to support the direction of leadership and fellowship I wish to take with other programs, such as Phi Theta Kappa, which will help with the drive of my academic processes."

## ABOUT THE PRCC SPACE GRANT

The PRCC Space Grant program is an affiliate of the Mississippi Space Grant Consortium (MSSGC). The MSSGC program is designed to Empower, Enhance, and Enlighten the next generation of Mississippi explorers through opportunities to engage with and contribute to NASA's mission.

PRCC is one of ten community colleges in Mississippi that participate in the program. Along with the STEM student stipend, funds are used to assist with Honors Biology and Zoology projects, middle school and high school science competitions, K-12 STEM teacher development, Community College STEM professional development opportunities, and promoting STEM to the general public. **RRR**

# Alumni Awards

Pearl River Community College Development Foundation will be hosting their annual Alumni Awards Banquet on Thursday, May 12. The event provides the opportunity to celebrate alumni and community partnerships that support PRCC.

The banquet will be held at the Lake Terrace Convention Center in Hattiesburg. A social hour will begin at 6 p.m. with dinner and the program starting at 6:30 p.m.

“We are excited to once again host events and recognize the many contributions that

our alumni and supporters provide to our college,” said Executive Director of Development Foundation/Alumni Association Delana Harris. “This support is essential to the success of our Foundation for current and future Wildcats.

“PRCC graduates work, live, and give to our local communities. We are proud of the outstanding commitment to excellence that each of these honorees represent.”

Tickets are \$100 and can be purchased by visiting our website at [prcc.edu/alumni](http://prcc.edu/alumni) or

by calling Mary Alice Chandler with the PRCC Development Foundation at (601) 403-1193. Tables may also be purchased directly from the Foundation.

Corporate sponsorship opportunities are also available. Sponsorship levels begin at \$1,000 (Bronze Level), \$2,500 (Silver Level) and \$5,000 (Gold Level). Please contact the PRCC Development Foundation for sponsorships and packages. **RRR**

## HONOREES FOR 2022

Honorees for 2022 are:

### Young Alumnus of the Year

Mrs. Hannah Davis Aucoin,  
 Owner of H & Co. Salon in Poplarville

### Alumnus of the Year

Mr. Kevin Hedgepeth,  
 Director of Acute Care Services at  
 Highland Community Hospital

### Distinguished Service Award

Mr. Bryan Maxie,  
 Regional Administrator for Forrest Health

### Outstanding Partnership

Mississippi Power Company

### Lifetime Achievement Award

Dr. James Sones,  
 Retired PRCC Administrator

## PRCC HONORS BIOLOGY AND ZOOLOGY STUDENTS ENRICH ANIMAL LIVES AT WILD ACRES

Pearl River Community College students in the honors Biology II and Zoology classes on the Forrest County and Poplarville campuses got to go beyond the classroom in their learning this semester. They did this by constructing enrichments for select animals at Wild Acres, a unique by reservation only exotic animal experience in McHenry.

Enrichments are activities, environments or toys that are stimulating. Their use can have many positive outcomes for the animals including improved mental and physical health. These enrichments allow them to perform natural behaviors while also

encouraging more activity and increased control over their own environment.

Prior to their construction, students spent time researching different animals and their habitats while keeping safety in mind. The classes decided upon four enrichments that could be used by a variety of animals.

“Each spring Bio II honor students enjoy researching, building, and implementing enrichments for animals at various facilities,” said Poplarville Biology Instructor Meagan Lee. “We were so thankful that this year we were able to work with a facility close to home, Wild Acres!

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From the Poplarville Campus;  
Back row (left to right): Meagan Lee, Calvin Rester, Jacob Braxton, Paul Lee, Kailey Travis, Seth Ladner, Caleb Thornton, owners Cody Breland and Jack Fletcher. Front row (left to right); Maggie Gressett, Jenna McRaney, Peyton Barber, Abby Pulver, and Hannah Smith.

“We look forward to continuing to build partnerships with other facilities like this within our state and provide resources to be used for years to come.”

Selected for construction and installation were a puzzle box and hanging puzzle feeder for the capuchin monkeys, a ramp and platform for the leopard, and a rotating bottle feeder for the otters.

“This was such a wonderful experience for our students,” said Forrest County Campus Biology Instructor Abigail Warden. “They were able to interact with so many different types of animals and give back to a worthy organization by providing enrichment for these animals that have been provided a much-needed loving home.”

Although these were constructed with specific animals in mind, these enrichments can be used for others in the future.

“We are so honored to have had PRCC’s Bio II Honors class come out to Wild Acres last week, and the efforts of the students have significantly improved the lives of our animals,” said the owners of Wild Acres, Cody Breland and Jake Fletcher. “From stimu-

lating games for the capuchin monkeys, to challenging tasks for the Asian otters, all species the students chose to focus on have shown great interest and excitement day in and day out. Shuri the black leopard has a new favorite spot to spend time on, which is her new platform the students built from the ground up!

“Working with Ms. Lee, Ms. Warden and their students has been a wonderful process, and we are so thankful for everything they are learning about the amazing animal kingdom. From the staff of Wild Acres, thank you PRCC Honors.”

Students in the classes genuinely appreciated the opportunity to learn outside of

the classroom. This hands-on project had students taking research and applying it to a problem faced by animals in captivity: boredom.

Freshman Kailey Travis of Picayune is one such appreciative student. “I really enjoyed watching how the animals interacted with the enrichments we built. How you could see them figuring out the puzzles was amazing.”

For sophomore Paul Lee of Purvis, this experience was a great fit. “I enjoyed being able to work with the animals at Wild Acres,” said Lee. “It has always been a dream of mine to work that closely with animals.”

**RRR**



## NATIONAL TECHNICAL HONORS SOCIETY HOLDS INDUCTION CEREMONY AT THE FORREST COUNTY CAMPUS

Pearl River Community College’s Forrest County Campus recently honored 10 students with a National Technical Honors Society induction ceremony.

The National Technical Honor Society currently serves more than 100,000 active members and nearly 2 million alumni since its inception in 1984.

“For these students, to be a member of NTHS is to be recognized and honored for their hard work and achievements as they prepare for a technical career,” said Sam McNease, PRCC Industrial Technology

instructor and NTHS advisor.

“Additionally, we strive to build members’ confidence, compassion, and leadership skills by organizing projects and events to help the community. It’s about growth just as much as recognition.”

Awarding more than \$2 million in scholarships since 2005, NTHS honors the achievements of top CTE students, provides scholarships to encourage the pursuit of higher education, and cultivates excellence in today’s highly competitive, skilled workforce.

National Technical Honor Society officers at the Forrest County Campus include: President, Sam Ranger of Petal; Vice President: Kari Nickey of Hattiesburg; Secretary: Monica Knight of Seminary; and Historian: Hannah Knight of Purvis.

“Being a member of National Technical Honors Society is an honor and gift that I am truly grateful for,” said Ranger.

“It is a privilege to be surrounded by so many talented and creative minds that we may better the technical fields in ever evolving ways. I am grateful for the mentorship of

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our advisors and would not be where I am today without them. The scholarship opportunities and career readiness are second to none. All of these aspects make me so proud to be a part of this wonderful group.”

For more than 30 years, NTHS has been the acknowledged leader in the recognition of outstanding student achievement in career and technical education.

During the induction, elements of the organization were explained including the seven candles that represent the seven attributes of membership: skill, honesty, service, responsibility, scholarship, citizenship and leadership. **RRR**



Inductees for the National Technical Honor Society at Pearl River Community College's Forrest County Campus for 2021-22 included from left: Darla Kittrell of Richton, Carrie Johnson-Jenkins of Petal, Hannah Knight of Purvis, Natalie Goodin of Philadelphia, Miss., and Morgan Benoit of Poplarville. Standing – Patrick Breland of Brooklyn, Crosby Stevens of Inverness, Kaylyn Bryant of Petal, Kitti Molnar of Oak Grove, and Marlon Johnson of Columbia.



## **PRCC INDUCTS MEMBERS OF PHI THETA KAPPA INTERNATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY**

Sixty-four students were welcomed into Pearl River Community College's Beta Tau Gamma chapter of Phi Theta Kappa international honor society on April 4.

The induction ceremony was held in the multi-purpose room at the Forrest County Campus with family members and other guests in the audience.

Phi Theta Kappa is known as the foremost honor society for two-year colleges with over 1,300 chapters worldwide.

Students elected for membership are considered academically successful having

completed at least 12 credit hours of non-remedial courses with a minimum cumulative 3.4 GPA.

Scholarship, Leadership, Service, and Fellowship are the four hallmarks of PTK. The current officers briefly shared how those hallmarks have played out for them as members of PTK.

Before the students took the PTK oath, Dr. Jana Causey, Vice President for Forrest County Campus, Allied Health and Nursing Programs, spoke to the importance of membership in Phi Theta Kappa.

“Take advantage of what we have to offer here at PRCC including a strong educational foundation,” she said. “Embrace the challenges faced as you move on to bigger and better things.”

PRCC students inducted into Phi Theta Kappa Beta Tau Gamma chapter for 2022 spring semester are:

Tobias Adams, Hattiesburg; Aidan Aultman, Hattiesburg; Evan Bayles, Hattiesburg; Brennen Bennett, Hattiesburg; Charity Bolton, Hattiesburg; Jackson Bowering, Petal; Shelby Boyd, Hattiesburg; Amber Breland, Hattiesburg; Patrick Breland,

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Brooklyn; Molly Kate Carley, Hattiesburg; Ariana Clements, Hattiesburg; Hollie Courington, Hattiesburg; Honesty Dawkins Person, Hattiesburg; Ameze Ekunwe, Hattiesburg; William Eubank, Hattiesburg; Carlee Evans, Hattiesburg; Carlie Fortenberry, Hattiesburg; Hequinn Fox, Hattiesburg; Jackson Garner, Petal; Logan Green, Hattiesburg.

Sierra Greene, Sumrall; Laura Grossman, Hattiesburg; Monica Hampton, Hattiesburg; Benjamin Hartley, Purvis; Kristen Johnson, Hattiesburg; Grace Kirby, Hattiesburg; Kelly Knaak, Hattiesburg; Monica

Knight, Hattiesburg; Jun Li, Guangzhou, China; Kymrie Lofton, Hattiesburg.

Patrick McGruder, Hattiesburg; Katie Anne McNair, Hattiesburg; Dylan Miller, Hattiesburg; Micah Mixon, Petal; Jacob Nasrat, New Augusta; Jenna Ochenrider, Hattiesburg; Ashlyn Payton, Hattiesburg; Monika Phillips, Laurel; Lindsey Philyaw, Hattiesburg; Ethan Pope, Hattiesburg.

Andrew Purvis, Sumrall; Logan Ratliff, Purvis; Jada Reedy, Hattiesburg; Janiya Reves, Hattiesburg; Ana Salas Mondragon, Hattiesburg; Kathryn Scharwath, Hattiesburg; Ella Seymour, Hattiesburg; Kayla

Shaffer, Hattiesburg; Kendall Shoemake, Hattiesburg; Emily Smith, Purvis.

Kayla Smith, Hattiesburg; Ashlie Snyder, Hattiesburg; Kimberly Sosa, Hattiesburg; Wuendi Soto, Hattiesburg; April Stringer, Hattiesburg; Haley Sumrall, Hattiesburg; Kortlan Taylor, Hattiesburg; Noah Taylor, Brooklyn; Kayunna Thurmon, Hattiesburg; Merritt Wallace, Hattiesburg.

Ryan Wallace, Hattiesburg; Marina Wardlow, Hattiesburg; Brooks White, Hattiesburg; and Shelby Young, Hattiesburg. **RRR**

## PRCC WORKER HAILED AS HERO AFTER PERFORMING HEIMLICH MANEUVER ON FELLOW EMPLOYEE

**M**ichael Yarbrough, a workforce project manager at Pearl River Community College, is being hailed as a hero by his fellow workers at the Woodall Advanced Technology Center after he performed the Heimlich Maneuver on a fellow worker.

The worker, custodian and handyman Doug Touchstone, was eating his lunch in the Woodall Center on April 12 when he began choking.

“I was eating a turkey sandwich, in a hurry,” said the 48-year-old Touchstone. “I took a large bite and started choking. I was holding my chest and trying to breathe.”

He was walking down the hallway and decided to enter the auditorium, thinking the downward slope toward the stage might help.

Yarbrough was in the auditorium checking some equipment when he saw Touchstone struggling and motioning for help.

“I saw him come in the door and he was sort of panicking, but I wasn’t sure what was going on,” said Yarbrough. “When he spotted me, he turned around like he knew what I needed to do. I put my arms around him, put my fists in his stomach and then squeezed and backed up at the same time.”

On the third time, the food dislodged in his throat popped out on the floor. The

incident was captured on surveillance video at the Woodall Center.

“He saved my life,” said Touchstone, who has had two previous incidents of choking on food. “This one was the worst.”

Yarbrough credits his recent attendance monitoring a first-aid CPR class PRCC conducted for a local company as a key for knowing how to respond. The Heimlich Maneuver, the world’s most famous technique for treating a choking victim, was one of the topics.

“In the moment, you don’t really think of the consequences,” said Yarbrough. “I am just

thankful I was there. I hate to think what would have happened if I had not been there.”

Marissa Brandon, who teaches first-aid and CPR as part of her curriculum at PRCC, said it’s important to teach the Heimlich Maneuver in these classes. “This is one of those skills that you never know when it will be helpful,” she said. “I am glad to have been able to contribute to Michael’s efforts to help a fellow employee.”

Meanwhile, Touchstone was back at work at the Woodall Center the next day. His lunch menu: soup. **RRR**



# IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO FIND YOUR CALLING

**P**RCC Cosmetology Student Jamie Thornhill Thompson shared this message on her Facebook page last night after the Awards Ceremony for Hancock and Poplarville Campuses in the Brownstone last night.

"In 2020 I was let go from what was my "dream job".

After selling our home in Mississippi, moving to Texas and working hard towards that "dream"... I was let go.

I returned home to Mississippi, tail tucked between my legs with what seemed like a big red stamp on my forehead reading "FAILURE".

I took a job as a store manager with one of the companies I had worked for only to realize I felt stagnate and ineffective.

I didn't know what to do.

I prayed hard and God reminded me of the time I wanted to go to school for my cosmetology license years prior but couldn't afford it financially. He also reminded me that the

reason I got into the beauty industry was bc I loved making people feel good and also the artistic freedom it gave me.

So in 2021, at age 37, my husband and I took a giant leap of faith. I left my job and got accepted into the Cosmetology program at Pearl River Community College.



I promised myself that I would do my best. This is what seemed like my last "shot". And it hasn't been perfect, or easy to say the least...but I have absolutely tried my best.

Today I got a call at 6:10 am saying I was going to be awarded the "Student of the Year" award. And although I'm grateful for the recognition...

It verified something I've silently worried over since day one of this journey.

That it's NEVER too late to "start over". God always has you exactly where you're supposed to be. Trust him, Trust your heart, try your best, don't give up. And you will succeed.

I still have 2 months till graduation and then certification. But MAN OH MAN... God is faithful. And I'm looking forward to the future. "RRR

## PRCC AT MISSISSIPPI ASSOCIATION OF FINANCIAL AID ADMINISTRATORS TRAINING

**F**ive PRCC employees participated in the Mississippi Association of Financial Aid Administrators (MASFAA) Financial Aid 101 Training for Professionals last week.

Our Assistant Director Jaime Missimer was a trainer. Participants included Rachel Wallace and A'Kendal Woodard of the Poplarville Campus, Gena Prince of the Forrest County Campus and Jasmine Hartwell of Hancock Campus. We are very proud of each of them.

Each year, MASFAA offers training for financial aid employees with 5 years or less experience in the field. The training was held at the Ridgeland Campus of Holmes Community College from April 12-14, 2022. Topics covered included a wide range of areas like the FAFSA Application Process, Verification, Professional Judgement, Return of Title IV Aid and Student Eligibility.

**RRR**



# AUDIENCES WOWED BY PRCC'S PRODUCTION OF DISNEY'S THE LITTLE MERMAID



For three performances over as many days last week, PRCC students and staff worked together to bring “Disney’s The Little Mermaid” to life on the Brownstone Center for the Arts stage. The musical was well received by attendees with many commenting on how it exceeded their expectations.

Based on the Hans Christian Anderson story and subsequent animated classic, “Disney’s The Little Mermaid” is the story of Ariel who dreams of life above her ocean home. Everything about humans fascinates her and she becomes captivated by the handsome Prince Eric. Feeling out of place in her ocean home, she soon strikes a deal with the sea witch, Ursula, to get legs with the hope of winning the prince’s heart. Thankfully, she has a few great friends determined to see her succeed and regain calm under the sea.

This musical production included beloved songs originally in the animated version of the show along with a few new selections. While the main storyline remains, there

were some variations to the plot to help the production work for a live action stage performance. This included having Ursula appear as her true sea witch self when using Ariel’s captured voice to keep Prince Eric from kissing her.

Music was provided by a dozen musicians seated in the orchestra pit and under the direction of Dr. LaDonna Tyson, Director of Choral Groups at PRCC. The addition of live music helped to elevate the overall experience for those in the audience. Along with selections that were sung, there were transitional pieces played to help set the mood and fill time as the stage was changed for a new scene.

Setting the stage for this familiar show required a mix of creativity and the use of the audience’s imagination. The use of projected background images and video along with key physical components carried or wheeled onto the stage for each scene helped to make it possible.

One scene that had some squeal with glee was during the song “Under the Sea.” Se-

bastian (Justin Wakeland, Hattiesburg) led several castmates playing underwater creatures down the stairs and across the space between the orchestra pit and audience before returning to the stage. The auditorium also had rounds of applause when beloved characters like Ariel (Anna Resse Arroyo, Hattiesburg) and Ursula (Mallorie Saucier, Carriere) sang key notes of songs like “Part of Your World” and “Poor Unfortunate Souls.” And the scene of Chef Louis (Jonathan Freeman, Picayune) chasing Sebastian led to many laughing out loud.

Audience members were given the opportunity to meet different characters after each show. Several grabbed autographs and snapshots with their favorites.

## POSITIVE REVIEWS

Both on social media and in person, people attending have had only positive things to say about the production. Attendees from Thursday night’s show were encouraging family and friends to get their tickets for the other shows.

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The Molaison family from Carriere thoroughly enjoyed the performance. One of the girls especially liked Ursula, Sebastian, and Chef Louis who was “very entertaining.”

Marc Molaison brought his daughters to the production. “I am really impressed with the facility and the students did a great job with their performances. I will definitely be coming back to see future PRCC productions.”

The costumes for this production were amazing, both when viewed on stage and up close. Makeup for the show was done by PRCC Cosmetology students. Together, they helped to bring the characters to life.

Journi Spence of Carriere also enjoyed the show. “I really liked all the costumes. My favorite was Ariel’s wedding dress.”

### SPECIAL MEET-AND-GREET

Several young audience members signed up for a special meet-and-greet held on Saturday afternoon. They were given a special card to collect stickers and signatures as

they went through seven different stations: get to know King Triton & Mersisters, visit Sebastian & Flounder, Meet Ariel, arts and crafts with a character, sail with Prince Eric and his crew, join Flotsam & Jetsam on a visit to Ursula’s lair, and finally enjoy a cupcake with Chef Louis and more characters.

One special guest at the event was Luna McElroy of Covington, Louisiana who won the pre-event costume contest. Her aunt had seen the contest announcement



on Facebook and knew her baby mermaid photo would be a great entry. The students involved in the production agreed, voting for her photo to be the winner.

McElroy had a wonderful time at the event with her parents and grandparents alongside her. She could be found twirling with the mermaids, giving Ariel all the hugs, and trying to not get blue frosting on her pretty white dress with an embroidered mermaid. She declared it “the most fun on land and sea!”

Kensley Myers of Bassfield was also super excited to meet some of her favorite characters and see the performance. She had a special interest in the production as her aunt Kajira Myers played different animals during the songs “Under the Sea” and “Kiss the Girl.”

“Ariel is my favorite,” said Myers. “And ‘Part of Your World’ is my favorite song that Ariel sings.” **RRR**

## BROWNSTONE FILLED WITH MUSIC AT THE 2022 WIND ENSEMBLE SPRING CONCERT

Pearl River Community College was bursting with activity last Tuesday night as the Wind Ensemble brought pleasing melodies to the Ethel Holden Brownstone Center for the Arts.

With graduation ceremonies just a few short weeks away, the concert was the last time for some of the students to play their instruments at PRCC.

“I love band,” sophomore Sarah Harrington said. “I’ve been doing it since fifth grade. Thinking about doing it for the last time in college...its bittersweet.”

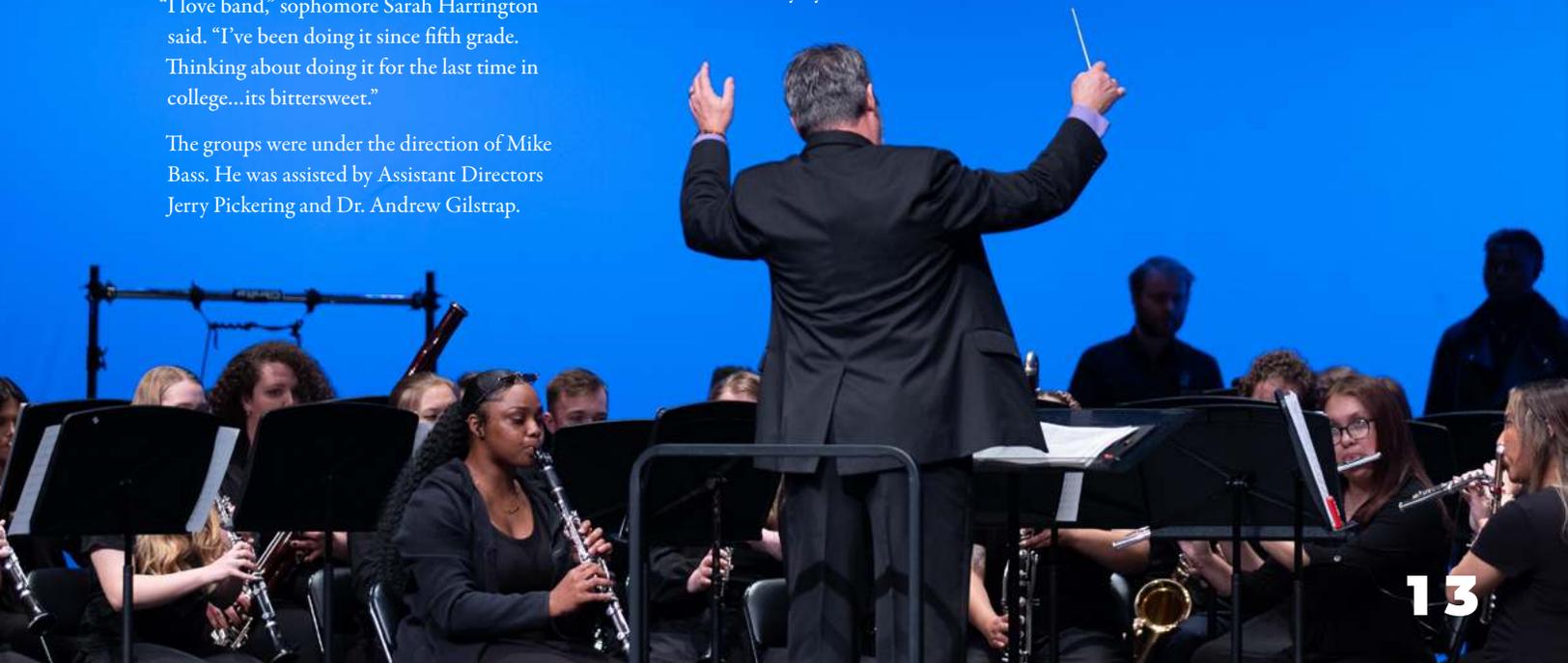
The groups were under the direction of Mike Bass. He was assisted by Assistant Directors Jerry Pickering and Dr. Andrew Gilstrap.

Bass reminded the students, “No matter how far they travel, they will always have a band family to come home to.”

Selections on the program included Accolade by Brad Massey, Pony Express by Chris M. Bernotas, Marche Diabolique by Brian Balmages, American Riversongs by Pierre La Plante, A Song for Friends by Larry Daehn, Arabian Dances by Roland Barrett, West Side story by Bernstein with

arrangement by Bocook, and Ignition by Todd Stalter. Conducting of the pieces was split between Bass and Pickering.

Many of those attending had a family member or friend in the band. However, the audience also included prospective students who attended the Wildcat Experience earlier in the day as well as community members who appreciate the live music and venue. **RRR**





## 3 PRCC GRADUATES INDUCTED INTO FINE ARTS HALL OF FAME

Three former Pearl River Community College students were recently inducted into the Fine Arts Hall of Fame immediately before the final concert of the school year. At last Thursday's concert in the Ethel Brownstone Center for the Arts, performances alternated between The Voices a capella arrangements under the direction of Dr. LaDona Tyson and the lively music of the JazzCats under the direction of Mike Bass.

Prior to the concert, inductees Billy and Jennifer Kilpatrick Carr attended an intimate reception with their children at the Alumni House. The third inductee, Ancel Ray Patten, Jr., died in 2020 and was honored posthumously. His award was presented to his widow, Jerri Patten, earlier in the school year.

"For many years, the Fine Arts & Communication Department at PRCC has been recognized as one of the premiere departments in the state of Mississippi," said Dr. Trevor Hunt, department chair and director of the Brownstone Center. "The success we have enjoyed is due to the contributions by outstanding students, faculty, and members of the community who have shown endless support over the years. The Hall of Fame serves as our opportunity to honor those who have helped build and shape this department into what it is today. It is a privilege to induct our new members."

Biographical information about each honoree was given again at the start of the evening's concert with images placed on the screens flanking the stage.

### HALL OF FAME RECIPIENTS

**Billy Carr** graduated from Purvis High School in 1996. He attended PRCC where he was a member of RiverRoad, The Pearl River Singers, and the Baptist Student Union. Since graduating, he has worked in the commercial construction industry.

He is currently a Senior Project Manager/Estimator for Hanco Construction in Hattiesburg. Billy has been able to use his knowledge of performing arts and construction to engineer and build the sets for Spark, Petal Middle School's award winning show choir. In 2020 he was elected Parent of the Year at Petal Middle School.

**Jennifer Kilpatrick Carr** graduated from Petal High School in 1995. As a student at PRCC, she was a member of RiverRoad, The Voices, and The Pearl River Singers. She was also a Student Government Representative and a member of Phi Theta Kappa. Following PRCC she attended the University of Southern Mississippi, earning her bachelor's degree in Elementary Education.

She began her teaching career in Lamar County and spent thirteen years in the classroom teaching mostly middle school math. She started a show choir group at Bax-

terville School and enjoyed sharing her love of performing with other students. Jennifer earned her Masters Degree in Educational Leadership from the University of Southern Mississippi in 2012. She is currently serving as the Assistant Principal of Petal Elementary School.

The Carrs met during their time together in RiverRoad and are thankful for the opportunities and experiences they were provided by PRCC. They are members of Asbury Church and enjoy serving together on the Asbury Praise Team. They live in Petal with their two children, Nate and Audrey Kate, who are students at Petal High School and members of the Petal High show choirs.

"We are extremely proud and honored to be a part of this," they said. "Our teachers here were instrumental in our lives. Dr. Malone played at our wedding and continues to be a special person in our lives."

**Ancel Ray Patten, Jr.** spent his boyhood years in Rolling Fork, where his father was the band director. He began playing in his father's band in the second grade, learning to play whatever instrument his father needed in the band. Eventually he settled on the euphonium, and he became one of the best players in the country. His family moved to Mississippi when his father Ray Patten took the position of Band Director and Chairman of the Fine Arts Department at PRCC.

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After moving to Poplarville, he was selected to be in the Lion's Club all-state band all four summers in high school. He went on to graduate from Pearl River Jr. College in 1970 and from the University of Southern Mississippi in 1972, where he was president for a time of the Golden Eagles Marching band.

Patten spent four years as a bandsman in the U.S. Air Force and found himself playing many funerals at Arlington National Cemetery during the Vietnam war as well as various ceremonies at the White House. He then spent a year as the band director at Purvis High School before answering the call to ministry and attending seminary.

After graduation, he was called to a small rural community, where he served as pastor of the Boistfort Community Church for almost 20 years. During this time, he wrote and directed children's musicals at the church and used his lunch hour to volunteer as the band director at the small K - 8 school in the community. He loved to get students started on their instruments and made it possible for many of them to continue in the high school band when they transferred into town.

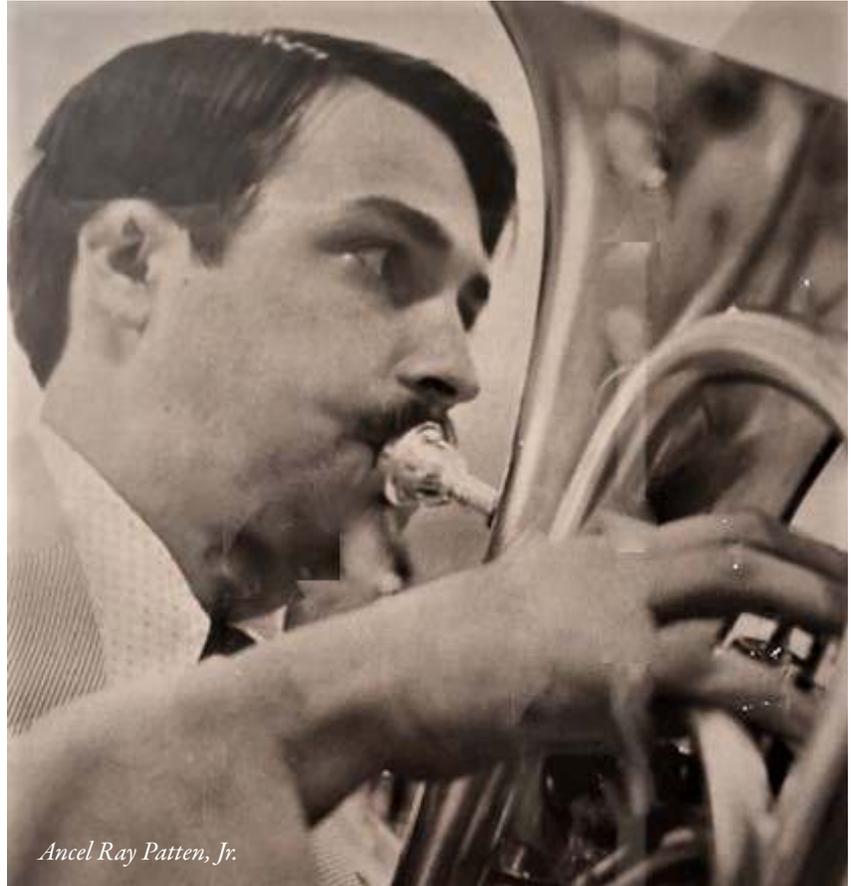
In 1999, Patten left the ministry to return to being a full-time music teacher teaching everything from elementary school music to choirs and high school bands. His favorite position was as the elementary school music teacher in a school with less privileged kids. He had a sacred calling to love those students and give them a good foundation in music.

When he could no longer teach due to his illness, he would take his whistles and flutes down to the hospital and play for the patients who had to spend hours getting chemo and dialysis treatments. He would often play their requested songs and then just sit with them to help pass the time.

"Buddy always had a song in his heart. He found various wind symphonies to perform

with throughout the years," Jerri Patten said. "At his memorial service, one colleague described his playing as like listening to 'melting chocolate.' He could always be heard whistling as he worked.

"PRCC will always hold a place of high regard in our family. The award that Buddy has received will always mean a great deal to us all." **RRR**



*Ansel Ray Patten, Jr.*

## **JAZZCATS & THE VOICES FINAL CONCERT**

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Pearl River Community College  
**Alumni Association &  
Development Foundation**

# DID YOU GRADUATE FROM PRCC?

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**ALUMNI ASSOCIATION & DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION!**

VISIT: [PRCC.EDU/ALUMNI/JOINTODAY](https://prcc.edu/alumni/jointoday)



# LaRUE SAULTERS

MISSISSIPPI COMM COLLEGE SPORTS HALL OF FAME | CLASS OF 2022



**P**earl River Community College's newest MCC Sports Hall of Fame inductee earned a rare "career double-double." LaRue Saulters is believed to be one of the first basketball players in Mississippi history to be selected to two all-state teams while leading PRCC's "Cagers" to state championships in 1945 and again in '47 after serving his country.

On Tuesday, Saulters will be honored alongside representatives from the 14 other community colleges during the 2022 Mississippi Community Colleges Sports Hall of Fame ceremony. The celebration is at Hinds Community College's Clyde Muse Center in Pearl.

Although Saulters died in 1996 at the age of 69, he will be represented by his children, Susan Perry and David Saulters.

"LaRue Saulters exemplifies everything you are looking for when nominating someone of his stature into our state Hall of Fame. Not only was he a decorated champion on the court claiming two state championships, he was a decorated individual," Pearl River Athletics Director Scotty Fletcher said of Saulters, who was inducted into PRCC's Sports Hall of Fame in 1990. "LaRue was patriotic and served his country with the bravery that people envy and love to see. He

and his family continue to help countless students at Pearl River Community College as well as being a pillar for the surrounding communities.

"LaRue was every bit of a servant leader and a true American hero. This is another example for us to pay tribute to a life well-lived."

### FIRST CHAMPIONSHIP

Saulters was a standout on the hardwood even before reaching PRCC. A native of nearby Carson in Jefferson Davis County, in 1944 Saulters helped lead his high school team — which was coachless that year — to a second-place finish in the state basketball tournament. He enrolled at Pearl River that fall and later led the Wildcats to the 1945 State Championship. Not only did Saulters captain the team as a freshman, but he was also named to the all-state team

After serving in Okinawa with the Eighth Air Force, Saulters returned to Pearl River to finish out his playing career.

### BACK FOR MORE

The '47 squad turned out to be a true worst-to-first storybook season. That season, the state tournament was limited to just eight teams, and despite dropping their first five games of the season the Wildcats squeaked in at No. 8.

Prior to the start of the tournament, Saulters had helped Pearl River defeat Perkinston (Mississippi Gulf Coast) 37-33. In a report of the rivalry contest, Saulters was said to have "spearheaded" the four-point win with a 12-point performance.

"Saulters, sparkplug of the PRC state championship team of two years ago, served notice on state junior college teams that the army has not taken too much basketball out of his system," read the article in The Weekly Democrat. "... Just to look at this pint-sized guard, a person would think that he would not have a chance in a league that features big men.

"But he was in the game every minute, dribbling with either hand and hitting the basket from either the right side or the portside."

(For the record: While wire thin, Saulters stood around 6-feet tall.)

The road to a second championship in three seasons wouldn't be easy as the Wildcats matched up with No. 3 Holmes, No. 2 Moorhead (Mississippi Delta) and No. 1 Ellisville (Jones College).

Saulters really made a name for himself and caught the attention of local scribes during

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the run, scoring 31 points over the three days.

Saulters netted 14 points in a 49-41 win over No. 3 Holmes; 10 points in a 56-48 win over No. 2 Moorhead; and seven points in a 42-34 victory over Ellisville in the title contest.

"With (Arnold) Dillon, George Stevens, (Wendell) McDowell, Larue Saulters and (Charles) Tiny Terrell playing for keeps, victory came sweet in repayment of the defeats suffered at the hands of Ellisville earlier in the season," The Weekly Democrat said. For his efforts, Saulters once again landed on the all-state squad.

Following a year at the Dallas Institute of Mortuary Science, Saulters played for his former high school coach, John Ray Ricks, at Delta State in 1948-49.

In 1949, Saulters married his college sweetheart, Mary Jean.

Mary Jean was a hall-of-famer in her own right and went on to be a champion of Pearl River. A beloved alumnae of Pearl River,

Mary Jean and her husband contributed annually to a scholarship fund. Mary Jean was named PRCC's Alumnus of the Year in 2011.

"They just had fond memories of PRCC," David Saulters said. "You see a lot of people who have that connection to a four-year college. Pearl River was in their heart."

Added Susan Perry: "They loved Pearl River. That's where they met and my mama always said how special it was."

After graduating from DSU, Saulters later taught at Sumrall before starting the Saulters Funeral Home with his father and another partner.

Even later in life, Saulters would still pull out his old skillset from time to time to prove he hadn't lost his all-state form.

Recalling a one-on-one game from when he was in high school, David Saulters couldn't help but laugh.

"I played a little basketball. I was never the ball player he was, but I played a little," the

youngest Saulters said. "When he was in his 50s and I was in high school, he could still whip me pretty good on the basketball court."

Although Saulters was often busy with his business, his boyhood fondness for basketball never dissipated.

"He loved basketball," Perry said. "Gosh, he loved basketball."

#### **PAST WILDCAT INDUCTEES**

Saulters joins a prestigious group of former PRCC standouts enshrined in the state hall of fame. Other Wildcats included are Willie Heidelberg (2007), Dobie Holden (2007), Tommy Walters (2008), Jerrell Wilson (2008), Frank "Twig" Branch (2009), J.E. Loiacano (2010), Bobby Weaver (2011), Mack Cochran (2012), Steve Regan (2013), Doug Daniels (2014), J. Larry Ladner (2015), Jeffery Posey (2016), Jay Artigues (2017), Larry Whigham (2018), Tim Hatten (2019), Elaine Powell (2020) and Wendell Magee (2021). **RRR**



*(LaRue Saulters is on the back row, second from the right.)*

# PRCC ANNOUNCES STAR-FILLED ATHLETICS HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2022

Pearl River Community College is proud to announce its Athletics Hall of Fame Class of 2022.

This year's six-person induction class is a distinguished group of Wildcats who excelled on the field and in the PRCC community. Comprising the Class of 2022 is football's Ricky Cuevas, softball's Rachel Hickman Kirkland and women's basketball's Carmen Labat. For the first time in the Hall of Fame's history, a father-son duo will be inducted in the same class as baseball's Eric Adkins and football's Terry Wayne Adkins will be enshrined together. Long-time SID Mitch Deaver is also being inducted for his tireless dedication to the Athletics Department.

For the second year in a row, PRCC is introducing an exciting change.

PRCC is also honoring the 2002 baseball team that broke through to the NJCAA Division II World Series for the first time in program history.

"This year's Hall of Fame class is as decorated as any. The selection process is always challenging when you have been blessed with extraordinary people and their talents here at The River. These honorees are more than worthy of this prestigious honor," PRCC Athletics Director Scotty Fletcher said. "Pearl River Community College has a rich and storied history in athletics that is well documented. These individuals have cemented their names into another part of Wildcat history.

"The inductees touched many of lives with their ability to perform at an elite level, while capturing many memories wearing the maroon and gold."

The ceremony will be held July 29 at Hollywood Casino & Resort Gulf Coast in Bay St. Louis. There will be a social hour at 5:30 p.m., followed by the banquet at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$100 per ticket. Children 5 and under are free.

PRCC is also hosting a four-person scramble golf tournament at 9 a.m. July 29 at The Bridges Golf Club in Bay St. Louis. Each golf team is \$600.

To secure your team's spot in the golf tournament or to purchase tickets, visit [PRCCAthletics.com/tickets](http://PRCCAthletics.com/tickets).

More information about the inductees will be provided prior to the July 29 ceremony.

## MEET THE CLASS

**ERIC ADKINS:** Eric Adkins was a catalyst for the Wildcats during his two seasons in Poplarville as a rare two-time triple-crown winner.

As a freshman on PRCC's 2001 squad, the Purvis native claimed the triple crown by leading the Wildcats in batting average (.343), RBIs (37) and home runs (10). He also led PRCC with 13 doubles and a .679 slugging percentage.

The third baseman followed up his debut performance by earning another triple crown. In 2002, Adkins hit 13 homers to go along with a .372 batting average and 53 RBIs.

Adkins' star continued to shine at William Carey, where he was a two-time Gulf Coast Athletic Conference Player of the Year and a two time All-GCAC selection. His 21 homers in 2004 are still a single-season record for the Crusaders.

**TERRY WAYNE ADKINS:** Terry Wayne Adkins was a true weapon for the Wildcats in 1973 and '74. Head coach John Russell had the luxury of deploying one of the premier kickers in the country in Adkins. The former North Forrest standout was a straight-on kicker who handled PATs, field goals and kickoff duties.

One of his best games as a Wildcat was a 29-7 victory over Hinds where Adkins accounted for 17 points on a 5-for-7 showing on field goals plus two PATs.

Two games later, Adkins helped lift PRCC past North champion Mississippi Delta 17-14 courtesy of a 42-yard field goal. His 62 points that season were second nationally and helped land Adkins on the all-state squad. He was also an All-American honorable mention following the 9-1-1 season.

The following season, Adkins was good enough to earn post-season accolades again under the guidance of interim head coach and PRCC Hall of Famer Harvey Seligman. Adkins still holds records for field goals in a season (13 in '73), field goal attempts (24 in '73) longest field goal (53 in '74) and field goals in a game (five in '73).

**RICKY CUEVAS:** A two-year starter on defense in 1974 and '75, Cuevas is said to have been "as mean as a snake" for the Wildcats.

Prior to arriving at PRCC, Cuevas had already built quite the reputation. A standout at Lumberton, Cuevas was one of 33 seniors selected to compete in the North-South All-Star Game. His coach, Jack Craft, coached the South squad.

With Seligman as coach his freshman season, PRCC went 4-4. The following year the nose guard flourished under the tutelage of PRCC Hall of Famer J.C. Arban. The Wildcats improved to 7-2, setting the foundation for the Wildcats' 1976 State Championship. For his efforts, Cuevas was named to the All-State and All-Star squads. He was also named the MVP of the All-Star Game.

Cuevas went on to play nose guard at Delta State in 1976 and '77.

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**MITCH DEAVER:** Deaver was a beloved figure and personality at PRCC.

A 1971 graduate of Purvis High School, Deaver attended PRCC before beginning his career in the newspaper business. He worked at publications in Lamar and Pearl River counties before returning to Pearl River in April 1996. Deaver quickly earned the nickname “Dean of Junior College Sports Information Directors” for his generosity in addition to a wide array of skills. Most notably, Deaver prided himself in his remarkable photography and being able to capture moments at just the perfect time. Although he died in 2015 at the age of 62, former Wildcats still ask quite often about “Mitch’s” photos; they don’t reference the school or other photographers by name, only Mitch.

As a sign of respect for Deaver, the league’s Sports Information Directors still honor him by including his photo in the annual composite football schedule.

Deaver is only the third non-student athlete or coach to be inducted into PRCC’s Sports Hall of Fame, joining former Director of Public Relations Larry Stanford and trainer Phil “Doc” Hudson.

**RACHEL HICKMAN KIRKLAND:**

Kirkland had a decorated career on the softball diamond at Pearl River playing for coach Leigh White. As a freshman in 2014, Kirkland boasted a 21-10 record with a 2.53 ERA and set the school record for strikeouts with 120. She also hit .237 with four home runs and 16 RBIs. Kirkland came right back in 2015 with another outstanding season. Although she was 11-12 as a sophomore, Kirkland broke her own strike-out record with 153. She also improved her ERA to 2.34 and hit .250 with 12 RBIs. Kirkland was named to All-MACJC and All-Region 23 squads both seasons. Kirkland went on to play at William Carey in 2016 and ’17.

**CARMEN LABAT:** Joining this year’s class of deserved inductees is Labat. The Waveland native had a stellar career at Bay High prior to signing with Ed Walley and PRCC. With the Tigers, Labat let the squad to the 2003 Class 4A State Championship and No. 1 final ranking in the Associated Press Poll. In addition to being named the Sun Herald Player of the Year, Labat was named All-State and was a McDonald’s All-American nominee.

As a freshman at Pearl River, Labat blossomed. She averaged 17 points and was named to the All-MACJC and All-Region 23 squads.

After a stellar sophomore campaign, Labat picked up another national honor when she was named an NJCAA All-American honorable mention.

As a senior at SLU, Labat averaged 3.6 points with 24 rebounds, eight assists and six steals. She was 22-for-59 from behind the 3-point arc.

Labat’s .370 career 3-point percentage is still in SLU’s record book.

**2002 BASEBALL TEAM:** The 2002 Wildcats proved to be a team for the ages. In head coach Jay Artigues’ first season at the helm of his alma mater, the Wildcats broke through for the program’s first NJCAA Division II World Series berth in Millington, Tennessee.

During the magical debut for Artigues, his Wildcats won a program-record 42 games while also claiming the MACJC South Division, Region XXIII and Super Regional titles.

In addition to Adkins, the 2002 team was comprised of the following student athletes: Mark Broom, Collin Smith, Chris Thompson, Nate Murray, Jeff Middleton, Josh O’Flynn, Josh Parker, Jake Smith, Nick Zavros, Jabrell Cook, Josh Parks, Jered Salazar, Blake Munna, Daniel Clark, Jonathan Mitcham, Andy Harper, Garrett Drake, Rhett Shaffette, Chris Stewart, Juston Gros, Eric Adkins, Brett Harris, Derek Underwood, Brad Wood, Neal Cannon, Chas Pierce, Jeremy Guidry, Jared Harris, Rodney Hayes, Travis Tucker, Ben Smith, Neil Favre and Brandon Arcement. Artigues’ assistant coaches were Jamie McMahon, Rob Segura and Tony Salim.

That season, Artigues was named the Region XXIII Coach of the Year. Jake Smith was named to the NJCAA All-American team. Middleton earned a place on the 2002 NJCAA World Series All-Tournament Team.

Artigues was a 2009 inductee of the PRCC Hall of Fame and was enshrined in the state Hall of Fame in 2017. Jake Smith was inducted in 2021.

Twenty Wildcats from that squad went on to play at the four-year level.

**PREVIOUS INDUCTEES**

Previous inductees who are planning to attend the banquet are encouraged to contact Coordinator of Alumni Services Mary Alice Chandler at [mchandler@prcc.edu](mailto:mchandler@prcc.edu) or 601-403-1193 to provide their jacket sizes. Deadline to submit jacket information is May 15, 2022.

Anyone who registers after the deadline can pickup their jackets at the 2023 ceremony.

**SPONSORSHIP INFORMATION**

Sponsorship packages are available for both the banquet and golf tournament.

The banquet has two tiers of sponsorships, the \$2,500 Maroon Sponsorship and the \$5,000 Gold Sponsorship.

The Maroon Sponsorship includes 10 banquet tickets, 20 beverage tickets, two rooms Friday night at Hollywood Casino and advertising at the banquet; the Gold Sponsorship features one four-person golf team, four rooms Friday night at Hollywood Casino, 10 banquet tickets, 20 beverage tickets and advertising at the banquet.

There are several sponsorship opportunities for the golf tournament as well. PRCC is offering \$100 hole sponsorships (which include a 24x18 sign next to the tee box), \$300 longest drive or closest to the pin sponsorships, \$500 awards ceremony sponsorship and \$500 beverage sponsorship.

PRCC is also accepting items for the silent auction and food for the golf tournament. To secure your sponsorship package or donate to the event, contact Chandler at [mchandler@prcc.edu](mailto:mchandler@prcc.edu) or 601-403-1193.

**HOW TO NOMINATE**

Know a former Wildcat who you believe should be considered in the future? Nominate by visiting [https://prccathletics.com/hof/Hall\\_of\\_Fame\\_nomination\\_form](https://prccathletics.com/hof/Hall_of_Fame_nomination_form) or visiting [PRCCAthletics.com/HOF](https://prccathletics.com/HOF) and clicking the nomination form link at the top of the page. **RRR**



## PEARL RIVER HOLDS SUCCESSFUL MAROON & GOLD SPRING GAME

Friday proved to be a successful day for Pearl River football's new Maroon & Gold Spring Game format. The game got underway with the help of honorary captains and PRCC Hall of Famers John Feaster and Jimmy Oliver as well as honorary coin toss captain and former Wildcat standout Craig Franklin and ended with hamburgers and crawfish for all.

Also making an appearance at the game was former Pearl River head coach and Hall of Famer Tim Hatten.

"A couple of times during the scrimmage, I looked down in the endzone and in the bleachers and it honestly felt like a home game," head coach Seth Smith said. "There were people everywhere. We also were able to have our recruits here and they were able to see what the vision is and what the campus, our administration and our fans are like. I don't think it could have been any better. We had great weather and great food and we had a lot of the Hall of Famers back. It really capped off what we thought was a great spring. I knew it was going to be good, but today exceeded my expectations."

Smith talked about what it was like merging the past with the present at the spring game.

"We were able to bring back guys like coach Hatten, Jimmy and coach Feaster. That was kind of the vision since the time we got here. We're not going to make any excuses. We realize that we've got to get a lot better, but COVID came along and blew a lot of our plans up. Thank God, now that we're back

to some normalcy we're able to implement some things that we've wanted to do since day one. We're hoping to merge the past with the present and restore what those guys once had here."

### ABOUT THE GAME

The offense opened the game and was able to get on the board quickly. Samford transfer Lawson Pratt (Tuscaloosa, Ala.; American Christian Academy) threw a 25-yard fade that was caught and downed one yard shy of the endzone. A few plays later Chris Holifield Jr. (Mobile, Ala.; Leflore) took a reverse around the right side of the field and broke a tackle for a 5-yard touchdown.

The defense made a big stand with 2:42 remaining in the first quarter of action when Elijah Jenkins (Picayune) rushed past the offensive line and sacked the quarterback.

The offense was able to get into the endzone again with 1:10 left in the quarter. Kayvon Barnes (Pascagoula) took a handoff, cut to the right side and broke up the center of the field. He broke one tackle and lost another defender with a quick shimmy to finish off a 39-yard touchdown run.

The defense forced and recovered a fumble just a few minutes into the second quarter.

Holifield struck again with one minute left in the third quarter, catching a touch pass and taking it for a touchdown.

The Wildcat defense made another good play by forcing and recovering another fumble.

One of the biggest plays of the third quarter came courtesy of Southwestern Oklahoma State transfer Emmanuel Armstrong (New Orleans, La.; McDonough 35). The quarterback found Jordan Foushee (Kiln; Hancock) over the middle for a 50-yard gain. The defense held strong on the drive, tipping a pass at the line of scrimmage that found the hands of Davontez Lynn (Farmhaven; Velma Jackson) for an interception.

A little while later Armstrong connected with Kevin Wilcox (Carriere; Pearl River Central) on a screen. The tight end had blockers in front of him and scampered down the field for a 27-yard touchdown. Smith talked about the play of his offense and defense at the conclusion of the day.

"I thought there was a great balance. The spring is all about development," Smith said. "We realize we have to get better offensively so we've worked hard to develop on that side of the ball, but we also have a lot of older guys on defense. We were able to score a few times on offense and the defense was able to get a few stops and some turnovers. There was a lot of back-and-forth football. More than anything, the kids played really hard and had a lot of fun. I don't think it could have turned out better." **RRR**

# PEARL RIVER'S TRISTEN WASHINGTON SIGNS WITH SOUTH ALABAMA



After a dominant season on the court, Pearl River women's basketball's Tristen Washington (Gonzales, La.; East Ascension) has signed to continue her basketball career at South Alabama.

"Tristen had a lot to do with our success this season, leading us to our first state championship in 28 seasons," Pearl River coach Scotty Fletcher said. "The thing about it is that she took full advantage of the junior college system and the way it is set up both from an academic standpoint and an athletic standpoint. She came in here after a good two years at Northwestern State, she

produced on the court and her statistics back her up on that.

"South Alabama is not only getting a proven winner but a proven person. She will embody everything that they stand for. She will be involved in the community, be a servant leader and be a great teammate. She will be someone that you can win on and off the court with."

Washington made the most of her one season in the maroon-and-gold, leading the Wildcats to their first MACCC crown since 1994, an NJCAA ranking as high as No. 22

and a 22-6 record. The guard led the team offensively, averaging 10.2 points per game. She also finished the year with 2.1 rebounds per game, 1.7 assists per game and 1.2 steals per game.

During the 2021-22 campaign, Washington finished in double figures 14 times, including a stretch of 10 consecutive games. She hit the 20-point mark twice during the season in road contests against Holmes and Copiah-Lincoln.

The new Jaguar enjoyed her time as a Wildcat.

"This year was like a breath of fresh air for me," she said. "It was fun, the coaches were fun and playing with my teammates has been one of the best things that I have experienced. Pearl River will always have a special place in my heart. It really means a lot to me."

Finding somewhere that she fit in perfectly played a role in her decision.

"South Alabama felt like a great place," Washington said. "I got to meet the community, organization, coaches and players when I went on my visit, so I just felt like it was going to be a great place for me. I wanted to go somewhere that was right. **RRR**

## THREE PEARL RIVER SOFTBALL STANDOUTS HEADED TO THE NEXT LEVEL

The Pearl River softball team has had many reasons to celebrate this season and added on a few more reasons Friday as three Wildcats signed to play with four-year programs.

This year's group includes Alcorn State signee Hannah Miller (Kokomo; West Marion), Xavier signee Aunie Rethmeyer (Belle Chasse, La.) and Mississippi College signee Emily Rigney (Waynesboro; Wayne County)

"This group means so much to us," Pearl River coach Christie Meeks said. "Two years ago, they decided to believe in us and our vision for this program. They have helped us establish so many firsts for us and Pearl River softball. Now getting to watch them as they sign to continue their careers with

great four-year programs brings us such joy. They have helped create a standard here and we hope to have many more of these signings in future years.

"These three are true leaders on this team and will always hold a very special place in this program. We are so excited to see them further their careers on the field and represent Pearl River Community College with pride, respect, class and character."

### HANNAH MILLER

Miller is in the middle of a great offensive season for the Wildcats as she holds a .303 batting average with 26 RBIs, 30 runs, eight doubles and five homers. She has also been a threat on the basepaths this season, stealing 20 bags.

As a freshman, Miller played more of a utility role for the Wildcats but still featured in 33 games while hitting .270. She finished the year with five doubles, three homers and 14 RBIs.

"Hannah is very special to us. She was one of our first recruits that committed in her class," Meeks said. "She decided to believe in what we were doing, and she has never looked back. Her growth between last year and this year has been unmatched. She has become confident in herself, knows the game, and has learned how to lead with her actions as well as her voice. I am so proud of her on and off the field. She leaves a legacy of true determination. Whatever she puts her mind to she accomplishes."

*continued on page 23*

**continued from page 22**

Miller feels like she will always be able to call Pearl River home.

"Pearl River means a lot to me," she said. "I grew a lot here and it will always feel like a big part of my life."

The future Brave felt at home on her campus visit.

"I really liked the atmosphere at Alcorn," Miller said. "I feel like I can continue to grow as a person, and it really felt like home the moment that I stepped on campus."

**AUNIE RETHMEYER**

Rethmeyer has proved to be a great defender and threat at the plate in her sophomore campaign. She currently holds a .275 batting average with four doubles, two homers, six walks and 14 RBIs.

A season ago, the catcher hit .207 with four doubles, two homers and 16 RBIs.

"Aunie has truly grown within her two years here," Meeks said. "She leads and commands on the field and that is what you need in a catcher. She is so much more grounded and confident in who she is at the plate and catching. I know Aunie will represent Pearl River to the fullest at Xavier. Her legacy has always been to be true to who you are and believe in yourself."

The Wildcat backstop felt that Pearl River has been an integral part of her growth.

"It's just a really special place. I don't think what this place means to me can be put into words. I think it is more about my actions. What I do on the field and my character show what this place meant to me. It has changed me entirely."

For Rethmeyer, being close to home as well as her future plans played a role in her choice.

"Xavier is so close to home," she said. "It's always been a dream of mine to go to pharmacy school and they have a great program. God has blessed me so much with this opportunity and I'm very grateful."

**EMILY RIGNEY**

Rigney played a reserve role as a freshman but has proved to be an crucial piece in the Wildcat lineup during the 2022 season. In 35 games, Rigney is hitting .317 with three RBIs and three walks. She has also registered four stolen bases.

In her freshman season, Rigney registered 18 at-bats, hitting .333 with one double, one triple and six RBIs.

Rigney was also named the first ever team captain under coach Meeks.

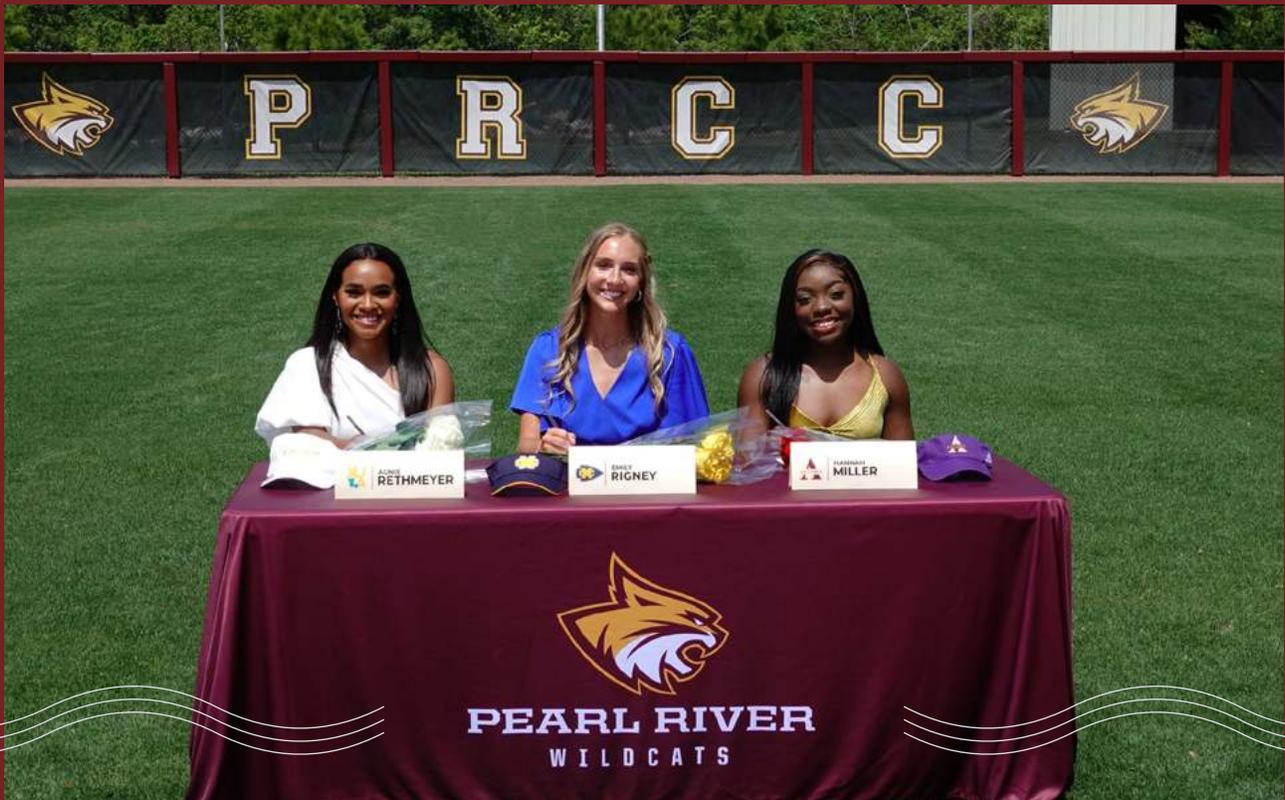
"Emily has been such a pleasure to coach," Meeks said. "She is one of the most coachable players and hardest workers I have ever met. She leaves a legacy that nothing is impossible if you work hard enough for it. She has earned everything that she has achieved, and I believe she will be such an asset to Mississippi College. She is a true leader on and off the field."

Friendship has been a big part of Rigney's time with the Wildcats.

"Pearl River means family," she said. "I've met some of my closest friends here and they'll always be some of my best friends. They have all helped bring out the best in me."

Rigney felt like the decision to join the Choctaw wasn't really a decision at all.

"This decision was easy," she said. "Mississippi College has been my dream school for as long as I can remember. I know that they will push me athletically, academically, and spiritually." **RRR**



# PRCC ATHLETICS ROUNDUP

## BASEBALL

Pearl River baseball continued to dominate the MACCC this season, finishing the year with a 34-10 record and 22-6 conference record. The conference record allowed the Wildcats to clinch their second straight MACCC title after a 12-3 run-rule victory over Northeast. They will now turn their attention to the Region 23 Tournament that will run May 16-21 at Dub Herring Park.

## SOFTBALL

The Pearl River softball team played some of its best softball down the stretch. The Wildcats finished the regular season with a 30-15 record, including a 20-8 mark in conference play. 30 wins in a season are the most since the 2014 team won 28. Coach Christie Meeks and her squad earned the four-seed in the MACCC Tournament that starts Wednesday.

## GOLF

Pearl River Golf wrapped up its first season since reinstatement by finishing fifth in the MACCC Tournament, allowing them to qualify for the Region 23 tournament. The Wildcats beat out four established programs to secure their spot in the tournament.

**RRR**

# Happy to Help!



Calling all Wildcats! Have you noticed someone in your department or around campus who goes above and beyond? Help us recognize Wildcats who are always Happy to Help by emailing [media@prcc.edu](mailto:media@prcc.edu)! Please include the Wildcat's name and a brief description on why they should be recognized!

## WEBSITE REQUESTS

**ATTENTION:** Department chairs and club moderators, if you have not already done so, please look at your existing page at [PRCC.edu](http://PRCC.edu). If you see anything that needs to be updated or corrected, please communicate your requests to Assistant Director of Marketing & Communications Richard Gleber ([rgleber@prcc.edu](mailto:rgleber@prcc.edu); 601-403-1352).

## MEDIA REQUESTS

The Pearl River Community College Marketing & Communications Department request form has moved! We are always Happy to Help! To help us help you most efficiently, please submit a request by visiting our form link:

[www.prcc.edu/faculty/marketing-request](http://www.prcc.edu/faculty/marketing-request)

You may also select the "Marketing Request Form" button inside the new RiverGuide. You can also directly email inquiries to [media@prcc.edu](mailto:media@prcc.edu).



## THE WILDCAT WAY SHOW WITH MCKINSY HARRIS

The Wildcat Way show has exciting things in store for the Month of May! Our host McKinsy Harris, will sit down with Jamie Thompson, who is a student in our Cosmetology program, to discuss her time here at PRCC and the impact it has made on her. The episode will release on Tuesday, May 9, 2022.

McKinsy will also be interviewing Head Baseball Coach, Michael Avalon, to hear about his successful 2022 season. This episode will release on May 23, 2022.

Follow on [YouTube](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and download the podcast on your preferred app. **RRR**



PRCC has something to offer for everyone, including kids! We are excited to have the Wildcat Kids Club growing.

Be sure to sign up for the kids club by visiting [https://www.prccathletics.com/Wildcat\\_Kids\\_Club/index](https://www.prccathletics.com/Wildcat_Kids_Club/index) to stay up to date with events on campus and what is happening within the community of Poplarville and Petal. **RRR**



**From Left to Right:** Mr. Chris Flynn, Instructor of Speech and Theater (14 yrs.), Mrs. Carrie Hales, Child Development Lab School Director (30 yrs.), Mrs. Sherry Newell, Secretary-Office of Recruitment (23 yrs.), Mrs. Angelia Ryals, Counselor (28 yrs.), Mr. Randy Henry, Department Chair/Instructor of Utility Lineman Technology (14.5 yrs.)

# Spotlights!



## CHRISTINA MILLER

PUBLIC SPEAKING INSTRUCTOR  
& LIAISON FOR THE WCU-PRCC  
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION  
PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM  
E-LEARNING

A Poplarville resident, Christina is married to Dr. Paul Miller. Her children include Lauren Sumrall; Reagan Sumrall; Mollie Kate Maldonado; and Sebron Miller. She also has seven grandchildren.

She earned her associates degree at PRCC before matriculating into USM for her Bachelors of Science degree in Communication. She continued her studies in speech communication, earning a Masters in Education for Gifted Education from William Carey College. She is currently working on an EdS in Higher Ed Administration.

Christina returned to PRCC as the first recruiter in 1993. She has been an adjunct instructor since 2001. In 2014, she began working as a school counselor with the transition to her current position in 2021.

She is an active volunteer in the community including FBC Poplarville, Rotary Club of Poplarville and The Women's Club of Poplarville.

"Since the first day I stepped onto PRCC's campus in 1988, it has been a fantastic place to attend college and work. At PRCC, we treat everyone like family. It always has been, and it always will be. The people who work at PRCC make all the difference. I always say, "It's a great day to be a Wildcat!"



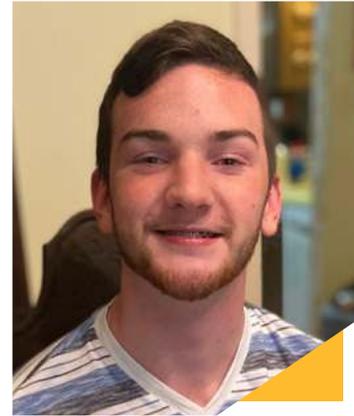
## ANGELA CHADWICK

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT TO  
THE OFFICE OF INFORMATION  
TECHNOLOGY  
POPLARVILLE CAMPUS

Angela graduated from Pearl River Community College with an Associate of Arts degree. After graduation, she worked in Hattiesburg before returning full circle back to PRCC where she has worked in the Information Technology Department for the past 23 years.

She currently lives near Poplarville with her husband, Chris. They have two sons, Bryce and Trent. Bryce is married to Amber and they have a daughter, Evalynn. When not at work, she loves spending time with her family and friends. Angela is also a member of First Baptist Church in Poplarville.

"I've always been thankful to be a part of this wonderful institution. I enjoy helping students and working with the faculty to solve their technology challenges. Pearl River Community College is truly one big family!"



## JAMES ENTREKIN

SOPHOMORE  
STEM PATHWAY  
POPLARVILLE CAMPUS & E-LEARNING

James graduated from Purvis High School with high honors before coming to PRCC. He is working on the STEM pathway for his associates degree. He plans to pursue a degree in aerospace engineering and a math minor at Mississippi State University after finishing here.

While he attends classes on the Poplarville Campus, he takes many of his classes online to better fit his schedule. He currently works at Ramey's in Poplarville.

In his free time, James likes to go to the gym, play video games, or spend time with his fiancé Miah Davis.

"PRCC is an amazing place to start a college career with many great teachers. Commuting is worth the drive."



### **Poplarville Campus**

101 Highway 11 North  
Poplarville, Miss. 39470

### **Forrest County Campus**

5448 Highway 49 South  
Hattiesburg, Miss. 39401

### **Hancock Campus**

454 Highway 90, Suite D  
Waveland, Miss. 39576

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